

The  
Work of  
CAPC & CPNP  
Projects

Literacy for the 21st Century  
**WHAT COUNTS?**

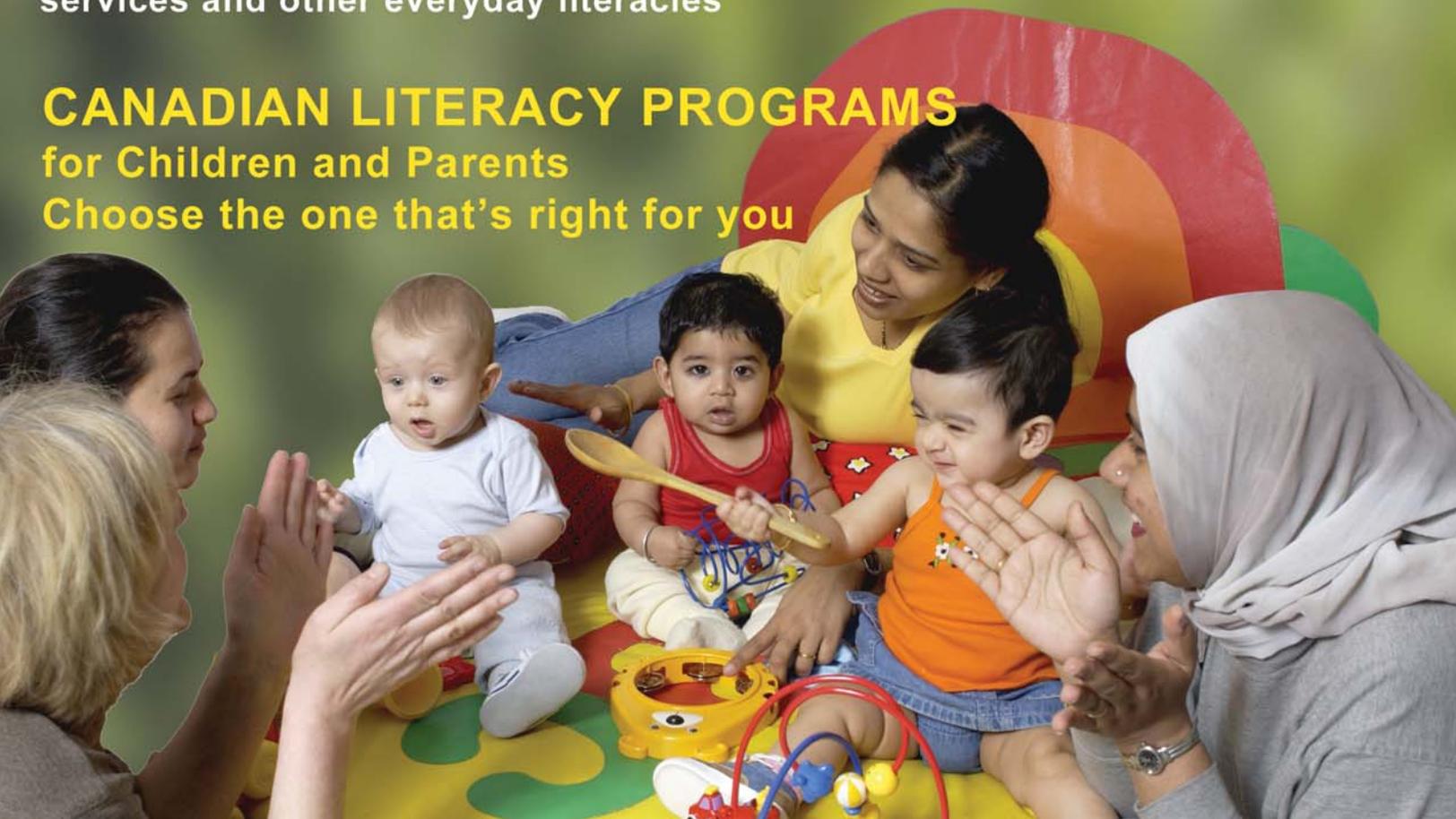
**BOOK  
GIVEAWAYS**

# Language, Literacy & Healthy Development

HOW PROJECTS HONOUR  
CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

Negotiating paperwork to access  
services and other everyday literacies

**CANADIAN LITERACY PROGRAMS**  
for Children and Parents  
Choose the one that's right for you



Great ideas for making health information accessible

**The  
Work of  
CAPC & CPNP  
Projects**

# **Language, Literacy & Healthy Development**

**Pamela Nuttall Nason  
Pamela Ainsley Whitty**

**A Health Canada National Projects Fund Project  
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## **Language, Literacy and Healthy Development: The Work of CAPC and CPNP Projects**

By Pamela Nuttall Nason and Pamela Ainsley Whitty (2004)

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## Introduction

Literacy is related in multiple ways to healthy development. Consequently it has become a serious concern for Health Canada. Recognizing literacy as a major health issue, Population Health notes that “literacy is an important factor in its own right, and closely related to practically all the major determinants of health.” The effects of literacy on health are both direct and indirect; whether the health issue is the safe administration of medications and infant formulas or the ability to secure food and housing, literacy is involved

(How Does Literacy Affect the Health of Canadians? *Health Canada. Population Health, Government of Canada. 3 July 2003* <<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/literacy/literacy2.html>>).

A great deal of literacy education and support is ongoing in Health Canada’s Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) projects. Often this kind of assistance is deeply embedded in the health education and parenting support these projects offer; sometimes it may take the form of specific literacy programs directed to parents and children. To capture the richness and diversity of this ongoing literacy work, Health Canada’s National Projects Fund invested in a survey of CAPC and CPNP projects across Canada. The results of this survey have provided the basis for this resource, which relies heavily on the words and ideas of project staff. In this way, the work and words of those on the front lines can inspire the future of literacy education and provide concrete guidance to CAPC and CPNP projects across Canada.

## Purpose of this resource

- To communicate how CAPC and CPNP projects make connections between language, literacy and healthy development
- To provide relevant support to CAPC and CPNP managers and staff so they can:
  - Ensure that families with diverse language and literacy backgrounds can access information about maternal and child health, child development and parenting;
  - Address the everyday literacy needs and desires of Canadian families;
  - Choose literacy programs and practices that build on families' strengths to support infant/child development.

## Practitioners supporting practitioners

Because this resource draws heavily on the experience of project staff who incorporate literacy education and support into their health, parenting and child development programs on a daily basis, we have used their ideas and words extensively. More than 100 of them responded to the *Literacy Matters* survey, which was distributed to all English and bilingual CAPC and CPNP projects in Fall 2003. Responses were diverse, as might be expected in a vast, multi-cultural country such as Canada.

While the survey identified some differences in how CAPC and CPNP projects approach literacy education and support, there were striking similarities too. These included:

- Practical, down-to-earth approaches to literacy education and support;
- Respect for the dignity of participants who struggle with print;
- Sensitivity to literacy, linguistic, and cultural diversity;
- Commitment to honour participants' strengths and address their needs;
- Ingenuity in adapting literacy practices, programs, and materials to meet these needs.

## Literacy for the 21st Century. What counts?

The very meaning of literacy changes with the times. For instance, advances in technology mean that information can now be accessed using computers, websites and videos. Canadians are learning to negotiate hypertext, icons, audio tracks, moving images and multiple screens, all at once. For many, the screen holds more allure than simple, printed texts. A picture tells a thousand words. Being literate is therefore no longer confined to reading words on a page.

Neither is literacy just a set of skills that can easily migrate across social, linguistic, and cultural boundaries. Canadians bring many different languages and cultures as frames of reference to understanding what they read. In fact, without the appropriate cultural and linguistic context, print just doesn't make sense.

And being literate in one sphere does not even guarantee it in another. Try reading a computer manual to test this out! Even if you can mouth the words, do you know what they mean? And can you put them to use?

So what counts as literacy? And whose literacy counts? Reading, writing and speaking in languages other than English or French all count as literacy, even though standardized Canadian literacy tests would discount them. Understanding culturally specific information – such as First Nations oral traditions – also counts. In fact, any communication practice that enables a person to function effectively in their local social and cultural contexts and participate in decisions that affect them must also be understood as literacy.

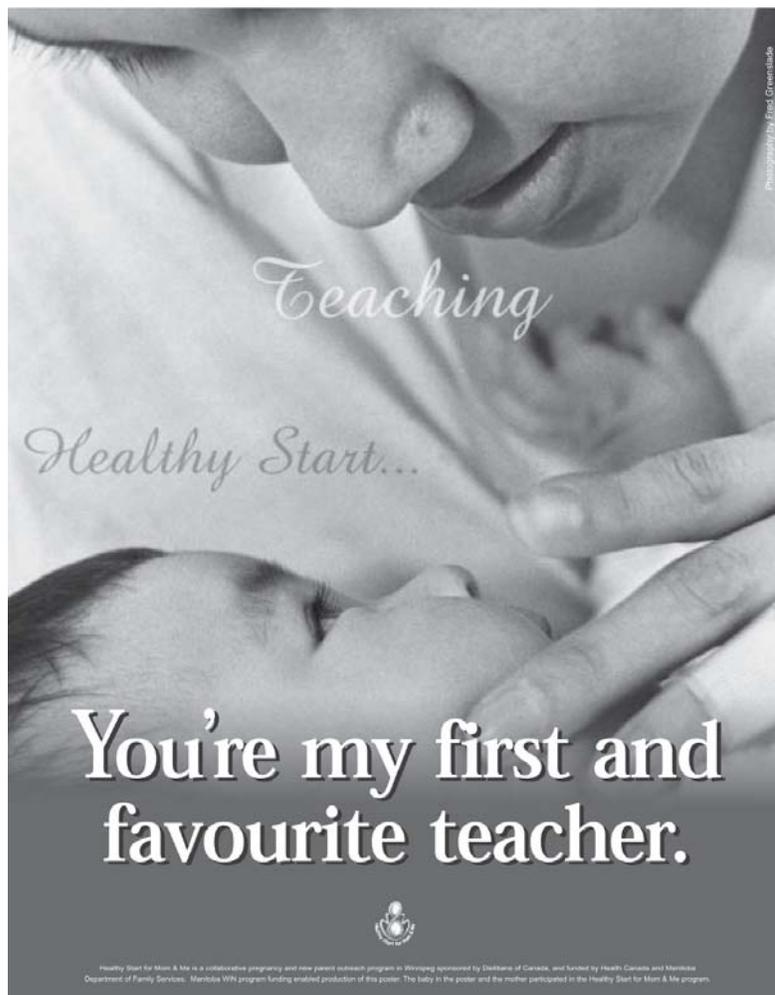
*The amount of stigma surrounding the term 'illiterate' is obvious and the term is incompatible with health promotion values*

Rootman, I. and Ronson, R. *Literacy and Health Research in Canada: Where have we been and where should we go?* Canadian Institute of Health Research 2003  
<<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/index.shtml>>

It is with this new vision of literacy, embracing technological advances as well as social, linguistic and cultural diversity, that health professionals must step forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*Race, gender and socio-economic status are all factors that critically effect whose 'literacy' counts. Some literacies have become powerful and dominant, while others have been constrained and devalued. The problem is not so much a lack of literacy as a lack of social justice*

Denny Taylor *Many Families, Many Literacies*. Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1997



*A Healthy Start... one of nine posters from a postnatal poster set produced by parents and staff and available for purchase from Healthy Start for Mom & Me. Winnipeg, MB.*

# Literacy Health Connections

A recent paper posted on Health Canada's Population Health Website states: "Literacy is a major health issue. Literacy is an important factor in its own right, and closely related to practically all the major determinants of health." (How Does Literacy Affect the Health of Canadians? [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/literacy/literacy2.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/literacy/literacy2.html)). The report goes on to note that the effects of literacy on health are both direct and indirect.

## Direct Effects...

Low literacy levels can be the direct cause of many serious safety risks in the workplace, the community and at home including...

- **Accidents** caused by misunderstanding warning labels and caution messages, such as taking a pictorial 'how *NOT* to handle' a dangerous substance pictorial as a 'how *TO* handle' instruction.
- **Injury** caused by not fully comprehending directions on potentially dangerous equipment in the home, on the farm, or in the workplace.
- **Illness** caused by misreading medication directions.
- **Health risks** to infants as a result of misreading directions for infant formula preparation.
- ... and many other serious scenarios

## Indirect Effects...

The indirect results of low literacy skills are serious too. Living in poverty as a result of low literacy skills has consequences in four of the five major categories of the determinants of health including...

### 1 Living & Working Conditions:

There is a connection between low literacy skills, low educational levels, and having limited choices for full, safe employment and good living conditions, all of which affect health.

Jobs open to people with low literacy skills can carry higher health and safety risks. Also, workers with low literacy skills may be less aware of safety regulations or be in a more fragile position when it comes to activism and asserting their rights over working conditions.

### 2 Personal Health Practices and Life Coping Skills:

Coping in society with limited choices caused by low literacy skills creates undue stress, leaves people vulnerable and can engender a real lack of self-esteem. Low literacy skills can also hinder the ability to be fully informed about healthy lifestyle practices, which may result in disease or illness.

### 4 Health Services:

Access to health information is reduced for people with low literacy skills when information is presented in forms they cannot understand.

Inappropriate medical services may result when people cannot find out where to go for the services they need, or are unable to assert themselves. This results first in under-use of preventative care and then in subsequent over-use of emergency care when a condition has worsened.

### 3 Physical Environments:

People with low literacy skills are likely to have fewer choices about housing and live in poorer quality houses in poorer neighborhoods, with less power to advocate effectively for healthier communities.

## Don't Blame The Victim!

One should be careful not to blame people with low literacy skills for their lifestyle or health practices. Low literacy can limit opportunities, resources and the control which people have over their lives. As a result, people with low literacy skills have limited opportunity to make informed choices about their life styles.

How Does Literacy Affect the Health of Canadians? For more information visit the Population Health website. [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/literacy2.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/literacy2.html)

Adapted from "How Does Literacy Affect the Health of Canadians?" [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/literacy/literacy2.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/literacy/literacy2.html)

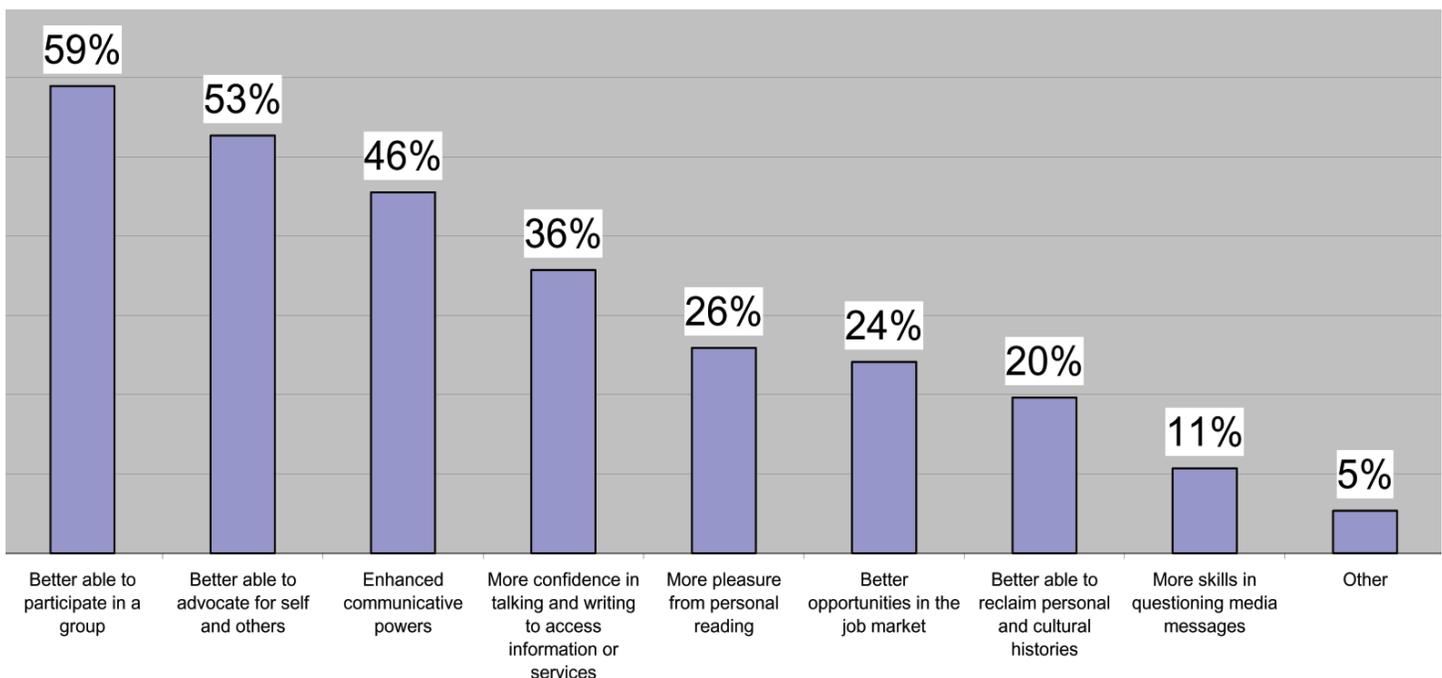
## Literacy outcomes for CAPC/CPNP Projects

The *Literacy Matters* survey asked CAPC and CPNP projects to identify which literacy outcomes were achieved by adults and children. The results indicate that whilst a range of adult literacy outcomes are achieved, the primary emphasis in CAPC and CPNP is on adults in their capacity as parents, and on children.

### Outcomes for Adults

According to the survey, outcomes most often achieved for adults in their own right are: participation in a group; advocacy for self and others; powers of communication, and confidence in talking and writing. Many projects noted that participation in a group is counted as a major accomplishment for participants who have formerly been socially isolated.

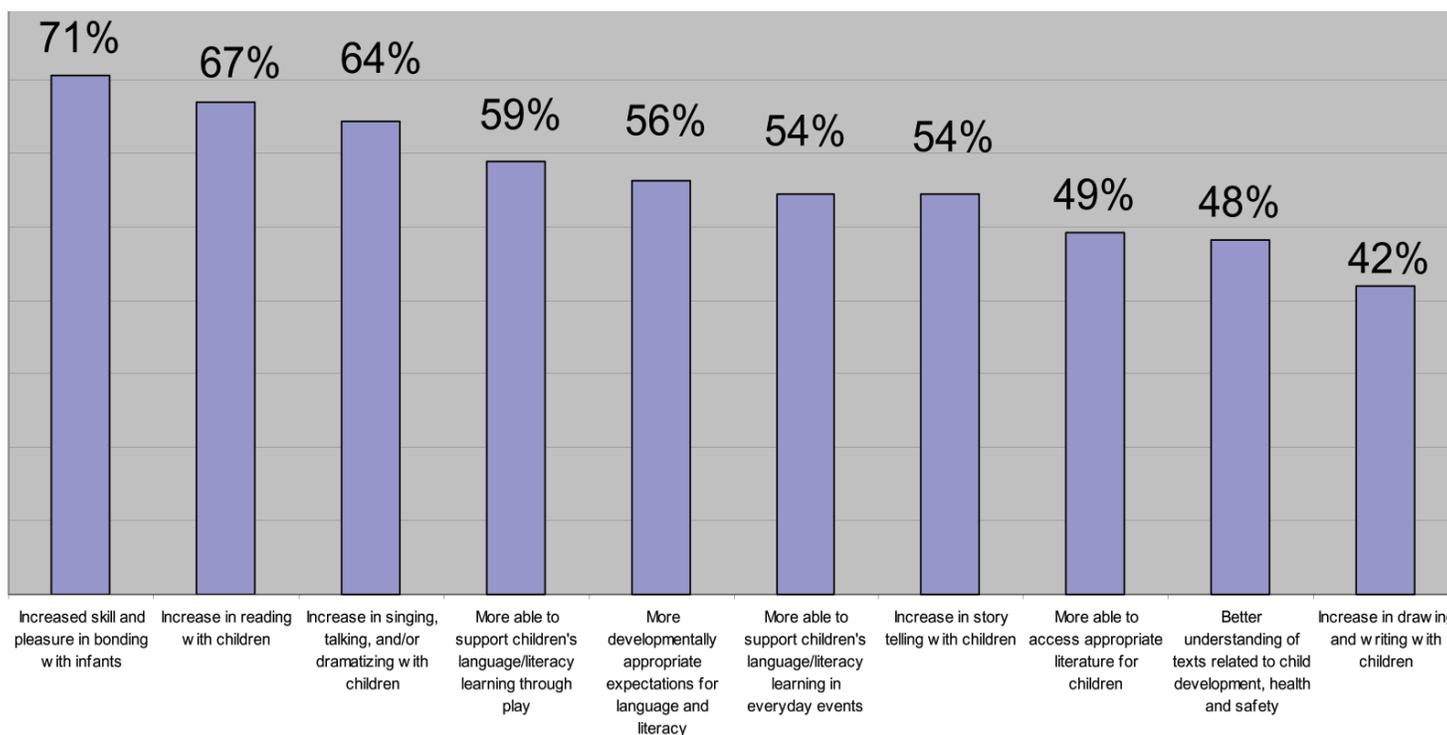
Personal pleasure in reading, job related skills, and cultural literacies were also identified as outcomes for adults, but by fewer projects (See graph 1).



*Graph 1: Number of Projects Responding = 112  
Projects indicated multiple outcomes*

### Outcomes for Parents

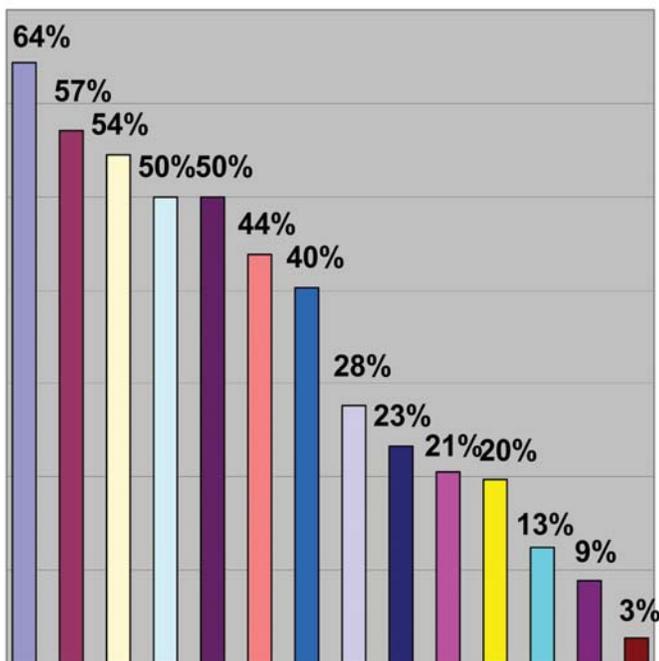
Almost all programs reported that parents gain knowledge and a range of skills in their capacity as their children’s first literacy teachers. Parents also gained a better understanding of texts relating to child development, health and safety in almost 50% of the projects.



Graph 2: Number of Projects Responding = 112  
 Projects indicated multiple outcomes

## Outcomes for Infants and Young Children

Outcomes relating to oral language – confidence in speaking and attention to patterns of language - were most often reported. Access to books and recognition of print patterns were also frequently mentioned. These factors, along with play and drawing, which were also identified, are generally recognised as foundational to the development of literacy in young children.



Graph 3: Number of Projects Responding = 112  
Projects indicated multiple outcomes

- More confidence in themselves as talkers, singers and players
- More attentive to patterns and cadences of language in talk, songs, and rhymes
- Increased access to books, magazines and other print materials
- Increased recognition of letters, words, and phrases in picture books
- More purposeful use of gestures and words
- More familiarity with a range of children's literature
- More role-playing and drawing to express ideas
- Increased use of writing to express ideas (letters and words may be used in conjunction with drawing pictures)
- Enhanced ability to discuss similarities and differences between their own experiences and stories authored by other people
- More attentive to product logos and labels, commercial and traffic signs
- Increased access to multi-media texts
- ESL: More confident in using the language of schooling
- ESL: More confidence in using their mother tongue
- Other

ESL outcomes were identified by a relatively small percentage of projects. However, this should not be taken as an indication of responsiveness to ESL participants, since most projects reported sensitive and innovative strategies to include a range of linguistic and cultural groups (see Section 2).

## Introduction

The title for this section came from Gail Wylie, project director of the CPNP *Healthy Start for Mom & Me* project. “Literacy education and support?” she said, “It’s in everything we do!”

In order to communicate information on maternal health and healthy infant/child development, practitioners have to consider the language and literacy strengths and needs of the participants. Otherwise there would be no real access to health information. In fact, as one practitioner remarked, “there would probably be no program participants!”

In recognizing that literacy is embedded in everything we do, Gail Wylie reflects the views of many CPNP and CAPC project staff who responded to the *Literacy Matters* survey. Denny Taylor, a leading authority in family literacy, also expresses the idea that literacy is an ever-present feature of everyday life.

*Literacy is not usually the focus of attention. The primary focus is on the accomplishment of the task in which literacy plays a part (Taylor, 1997).*

Whether the task is shopping for nutritious food, understanding prenatal development, singing to babies, or learning new parenting skills, language and literacy invariably play a part. Sometimes the part that literacy plays is obvious. For example, it’s clear that accurately reading ingredients on product labels is important for healthy eating, essential for pregnant women, and life-saving when pregnant women have diabetes.

Sometimes the literacy connection is more subtle and less direct, but no less important. For example, programs that help forge bonds between parents and their newborns help cultivate the relationship that is essential for early language development.

In any event, language and literacy infuse every CPNP and CAPC program so that even when other health matters claim priority, staff must always be conscious of the impacts.

## Ensuring access to information on health, parenting and safety: A learner-sensitive approach

*At Healthy Start for Mom & Me we think carefully about:*

Things that isolate...	Things that connect...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicating with every person in the same style (your style)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mirroring the communication style of each individual</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• referring to people as "clients"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• referring to people as "participants"</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• questions that box into a corner: "Do you plan to breastfeed?"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• questions that open a discussion: "how have you decided to feed your baby?"</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focussing on people's deficits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focussing on people's strengths; celebrating accomplishments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expecting people to fit the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making the program fit the people</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• judgement and 'zero tolerance'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding and "harm reduction"</li> </ul>

*Excerpted from a longer list produced by Healthy Start for Mom & Me, a collaborative pregnancy and new parent outreach program in Winnipeg sponsored by Dietitians of Canada and funded by Health Canada (Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program and Healthy Child Manitoba (Healthy Baby program) Revised: October 2003*

CAPC and CPNP program staff use a variety of methods and strategies to ensure participants can access health information. The strategies they identified in the *Literacy Matters* survey are most typical of a learner sensitive approach:

- Choice and adaptation of program materials to match the reading skills of the participants
- Mediation of print
- Highlighting key messages

*Many of our current staff are former participants who have struggled with life circumstances. We find this helps staff relate to the life circumstances of participants.*

Michelle Ward, Kids First Association

## Choosing program materials to match the reading skills of the participants

Many practitioners begin with the idea that clear simple messages are well suited to their program participants. They choose print materials that are:

- *Short and to the point*
- *Simple with large print and visual supports*
- *Written in plain language*

To make print more inviting and less intimidating, practitioners:

- *Use lots of white space*
- *Communicate the main message with pictures and diagrams*
- *Include an audio, visual or hands-on component*

To ensure that program materials are pitched at an appropriate reading level, practitioners:

- *Consider their effectiveness elsewhere*
- *Preview materials carefully*
- *Solicit similar programs' suggestions*
- *Choose through partnerships with other organizations*
- *Subject print to 'readability' tests*

*There are over one hundred factors that affect how easy, or hard, a given document is to read and understand. These factors include sentence length, word choice, layout, tone, organization, use of illustrations and appeal to the reader.*

Helene Osborne Health Literacy Consulting Dec.2000  
<<http://www.healthliteracy.com/oncalldec2000.html>>

Motivation to read depends on the appeal of the content. It is easier for readers to engage with and understand print that is of high interest to them and relevant to their lives. Project staff therefore give consideration to materials that are:

- *Age appropriate*
- *Culturally diverse*
- *Available in multiple languages*
- *A good match for the participants' social and cultural experiences*

To adjust materials to better fit participants' reading skills, staff will:

- *Adapt materials for both high and low literacy levels*
- *Simplify and shorten text*
- *Supplement with audio and visual components from the start of the program*
- *Provide written translations in the first language of participants*

*Looking for good, plain language health information on birth control or breastfeeding? Cancer or children? Febrile seizures or foot care? Pap tests or poverty? Tattooing or tuberculosis? Weight loss or workplace health and safety? You'll probably find a supplier in the **Directory of Plain Language Health Information**. You'll also find clear directions on how to assess the readability of program materials you are thinking of using. And great tips for how to make the fact sheets and pamphlets you design more inviting and easy to read.*

*This resource was published by the Canadian Public Health Association and the National Literacy and Health Program.*

*It is freely available on the Internet <[www.pls.cpha.ca](http://www.pls.cpha.ca)>.*

## Mediating print

Many CAPC and CPNP participants need personal help with understanding the printed word. While some may have a low level of skill when it comes to reading, others can read in their first language, but not in English. Sometimes a crisis has compromised the ability to make sense of a printed text; or unfamiliar medical terms may pose a problem. In all cases, project staff approach participants with the utmost tact to preserve the dignity of the individual yet ensure that essential information is conveyed.

*We never assume people can read.  
We ask if they would like us to do  
paperwork WITH them.*

Gail Wylie, Healthy Start for Mom & Me

Often literacy support is given in the context of the home visiting program.

Project staff noted that home visits are very important:

- *Home visitation allows for one-on-one interaction with participants, so pamphlets about programs and sessions are explained and/or read together (Laurie Lafortune, Healthy Families)*
- *We use home visitors who are from those cultures and who support the integration into this society (Jim Howes, Babies Best Start)*

- Will do one-to-one to accommodate literacy needs if necessary. (Diane Hill, Better Beginnings)
- I also model behaviour by reading to the children whenever possible (Rhonda Ginther, Egadz Teen Parent Program)

Centre based programs offer different kinds of opportunities for participants who are able to mediate print for each other as part of their involvement in parenting and health education groups. Staff are able to structure these group activities so that participants who struggle with reading and writing can be included without embarrassment.

*We have community boards in which local events (including literacy) are advertised. Staff seeks out information to be placed on the board. In addition staff also point out these events to participants and through verbal communication provide the details.*

Michelle Ward, Kids First Association

- In circles we offer people the opportunity to read aloud but never pick people out to read. When questions are asked to be put onto paper, we ask the participants to use pictures and/or words, but never say “if you are uncomfortable writing...” (Barb Desjardins, In A Good Way)
- Any activities that do involve having the participants read something we structure in such a way that they have the option of having someone else read it (Lorraine Makus, Anna’s House)
- We always put them in pairs or trios so that they can support each other in reading, even with simple children’s books (UNB and Fredericton Regional Family Resource Center)
- Some of our fathers cannot read, but we always find ways to communicate through hands-on education. (S. Bauer, Liard Basin Task Force CAPC Programs (Rural))

### Highlighting key messages

In health and safety education, lives can depend on how well key messages are understood. Staff of CPNP and CAPC projects cannot rely solely on print to communicate crucial messages. Therefore they employ a variety of approaches that combine print with pictures and other media to ensure that participants know what they need to know.

### *Combining talk, pictures and print*

Sometimes a three-pronged approach is needed where print is minimized and pictures and discussion supplement the written word. The idea is to use whatever it takes to get key messages across:

- *Many of our participants have low literacy levels and therefore we are always cognizant of using minimal verbal and maximum amount of visual content to get important messages across (Yvette Nechvatal-Drew, Pre & Post Natal Nutrition Project)*
- *We do not use a lot of written materials, but, when we do, we incorporate pictures and simple language (Barb Desjardins, In A Good Way)*

### *Making posters*

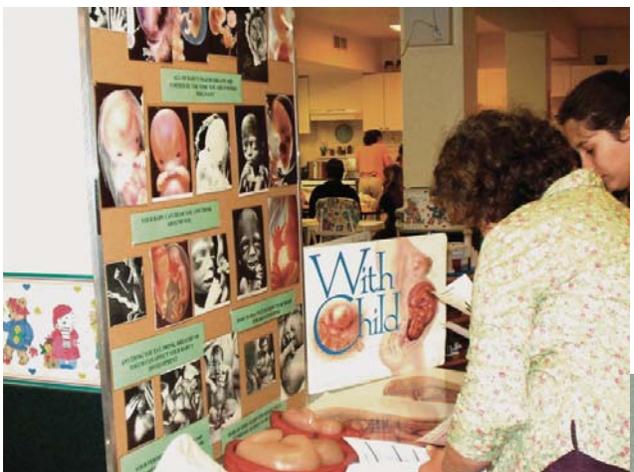
Posters can deliver a single key message effectively, leaving a lasting impression with only brief exposure. When participants make the posters themselves, they begin to think more critically about how posters work to get their message across. In one project: *Many pamphlets and poster displays are in the Centre, usually created by a student, for example FASD Display on September 9, National FASD Awareness Day (Lynne Cornish-Braun, Saskatoon Friends of Students and Kids).*



*A Healthy Start... one of nine posters from a prenatal poster set produced by parents and staff and available for purchase from Healthy Start for Mom & Me. Winnipeg, MB.*



This and other posters on diabetes are also available in English on the Health Canada website < <http://www.bc-sc.gc.ca/fnibb-dgspni/fnibb/cp/adi/resources/index.htm#Posters> >. Source: Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative, Health Canada, April 2002 © Reproduced with the permission of the Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2004.



Above: Poster Display of prenatal development. Submitted by Mary Ann Meagher, Brighter Futures. Peterborough Family Resource Centre.



**Nutrition Memory Game: Players flip the tokens to make a pair!**  
 Playing games combines talk, pictures and print with pleasure. Nutrition Memory Game: Based on the Northern Food Guide. Created by Brenda Hall for Growing Together. Hay River, NT. Photographed by Joy Cummings, UNB Integrated Technology Services



Playing Pregnancy Balderdash helps de-mystify medical terms for expectant moms. Submitted by Gail Wylie, Healthy Start for Mom and Me. Winnipeg, MB



*A Healthy Start... one of nine posters from a prenatal poster set produced by parents and staff and available for purchase from Healthy Start for Mom & Me. Winnipeg, MB.*

### *Using multi-media*

Increasingly, Canadians access information through television, videos, and the Internet. Project staff maximize these options by:

- Showing health videos on a regular basis
- Offering CDs, tapes, and books on tape via toy and parent lending libraries
- Making programs available in a variety of mediums (print, audio, video)

*The fathers are interested in learning more about technology; computers will be used in our future classes."*

Robin Hicken, Gesundheit Für Kinde

### *Providing reading materials to take home*

Apart from the flyers and pamphlets thrust relentlessly into our mailboxes, reading materials are not free. Books, newspapers and magazines are an unlikely budget priority for families on limited income. Knowing this, many projects provide current magazines and pamphlets on good housekeeping and parenting, as well as books for parents and children.

#### Parenting magazines and books

- *Current Parenting and Youth magazines are available in the Centre (Lynne Cornish-Braun, Saskatoon Friends of Students and Kids)*
- *I hand out literature and recommend books . . . age appropriate to share with their children. And I offer other resource books to the parents if they need information on a certain topics, for example on parenting, anger management, crafts and so on (Rollanda Chezick, Brighter Futures Society)*
- *We have developed Readiness to Learn manuals (low literacy, curriculum-based workshops) handouts, resource booklets (e.g. Helping Dads Figure Out Breastfeeding) (Cathy Constantino, SIRCH / Bright Starts for Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes and Northumberland Counties)*

#### Cooking recipes (in pictures and words) along with the food

- *We have created a “picture dictionary” of common cooking terms, ingredients etc. to facilitate easier use of recipes. We create recipes to complement our group program that use pictures to help women to follow them at home (Robin Hicken, Gesundheit Für Kinder)*

*50 “Idea Kits” are in the process of being developed at the centre and all materials have been reviewed by the Adult Network. The Kits contain videos and easy to read manuals and handouts to reinforce learning outcomes.*

*Michelle Margrait, Maggie’s Place - A Resource Centre for Families*

### Book giveaways

- Many projects collaborate with other organizations to ensure that books are freely available to families that might otherwise have few or none. See p 42-43 for more detail on where projects get books from and how they distribute them

### Collaboration with public libraries to ensure easier access to books

- *We partner with local libraries*
- *We have also arranged with the library for participants to get no-cost library cards if money is an issue (name withheld by request)*

*We have had a range of fathers attend programs. They have different levels of literacy and different levels of commitment to changing their literacy levels. But I feel any programs they attend are beneficial for bonding and interaction with their children.*

Waltraud Grieger, Growing Years Family Resource Centre

# Providing linguistically and culturally appropriate information



Language and culture are inseparable. Programming must reflect what is appropriate for diverse participants. Of particular concern are projects that serve First Nations and New Canadians. In the *Literacy Matters* survey projects shared how they take a linguistically and culturally responsive approach when they:

- Communicate in the first languages of new Canadians
- Provide written materials in multiple languages
- Honour First Nations and Inuit languages and traditions

## Communicating in First Languages of New Canadians

Sometimes newcomers to Canada speak little or no English. CAPC and CPNP projects have designed numerous strategies to reach and teach them.

### First contact in first language

Many projects select personnel from the community who understand both the language and the local cultural context. In the words of one project that serves new Canadians: *It is important to have staff and/or volunteers able to speak their language and aware of the culture, traditions, and strengths/challenges they bring from their homeland* (Kathy Simpson, Simcoe County & York Region CAPC).

*The experience of sitting in one of our LINC partners' waiting rooms that only had information posted in Chinese and everyone there speaking Chinese made me realize how important it was to provide supports in the family's first language. I was surrounded by material that I knew was describing the programs that we were partnering to provide, but I had no idea what the flyers said or even whom I could ask for more information!*

Kathy Simpson, Simcoe County & York Region CAPC

Staff helps bridge the linguistic and cultural gap that new Canadian families experience, assisting in the process of social integration. As Lorraine Makus of Anna's House puts it:

Having staff that speak their language also is very helpful (otherwise we

probably wouldn't be seeing as many of these families). Very often they need someone to talk to and to share their experiences with.

Home-visiting programs are effective because they offer ongoing personal contact in the participant's first language. In some projects, bilingual and multilingual home visitors are available to disseminate health and parenting information in the family's first language. Home visitors are particularly important for immigrant women who speak neither English nor French:

*It is a lot more difficult for women to learn the language than for their partners, and it is often difficult for the women to come out to programs due to time pressures at home and transportation difficulties* (Lorraine Makus, Anna's House).

## Interpretation for ESL participants

Interpreters play a vital role for some families to access health information and health services. However, for some linguistic groups they can be difficult to find, hard to access, and expensive.

In some locations it is virtually impossible to find professional interpreters in the participant's first language, so project personnel are resourceful. In addition to using staff and community members as interpreters, they *encourage participants to bring family members to appointments for interpretation {and} design flexible schedules for appointments that allow family to attend for interpretation* (Diane Hill, Better Beginnings).

*We don't use flyers or other printed resources; our population cannot read in their own language (Low German is an unwritten language) and English. We use the phone to communicate scheduling changes etc. We keep our schedule consistent to avoid confusion.*

Robin Hicken, Gesundheit Für Kinder

*The approach we use with our other CPNP Participants (geared to lower literacy levels) also works well with our immigrant women. As in the rest of our program, it is crucial to have participant-driven groups (what do the women want to learn, what is helpful for them). There also needs to be a balance between celebrating their past/heritage introducing them to new things and helping them integrate to a new culture and country.*

Lorraine Makus, Anna's House

*Interpreters are very valuable, as we've learned not to assume that individuals in our program understand what we're saying. They might nod and smile but yet we're not able to communicate with them and vice versa.*

Project name withheld by request

## Print materials in multiple languages

Although accessing print materials for the many linguistic communities served by CPNP and CAPC projects can be challenging, some materials are available in multiple languages:

- *We provide a range of print and multimedia material for ESL families. Primary sources include the Talking with Your Child in First Language program and our local Health Unit.* (Kathy Simpson, Simcoe County & York Region CAPC)
- *We provide the Canada Food guide in eight different languages* (Yvette Nechvatal-Drew, Pre & Post Natal Nutrition Project)
- *We promote dual language literacy kits through toy lending library* (Wendy Pol, Families First in White Oaks CAPC)



*Canada's Food Guides in Chinese. Adapted from Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating for People Four Years and Over, Health Canada, 1992. Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2002. Sponsored by the Ontario Women's Health Council. Submitted by Colleen Logue, Nutrition Resource Centre Ontario Public Health Association. Toronto, N. <[www.nutrition.ca/guide.html](http://www.nutrition.ca/guide.html)>.*

However, many projects note that publications in the first languages of their participants can be hard to find and expensive:

- *We have received some written materials and videos (in low-German) from the Mennonite Central Committee in Aylmer, Ontario. It has been very difficult to access resources from Canada* (Lorraine Makus, Anna's House)
- *Problem is that not many books are available in different languages, and we have many different languages, more than eight* (Candace Wilson, Better Beginnings Now – CAPC)
- *Dual language books such as "The Hungry Caterpillar" are often difficult to find in many languages, expensive* (Wendy Pol, Families First in White Oaks CAPC)
- *Not all material is available in the necessary languages* (Cheryl Booth, Port Cares: CAPC Niagara Brighter Futures)

## Translation as one solution

Some projects translate written materials from English to the first languages of their participants. That requires human and financial resources. Projects meet the need in various ways:

- *Staff provide translations* (Candace Wilson, Better Beginnings Now – CAPC)
- *We try to utilize staff and volunteers for translation when needed and available* (Yvette Nechvatal-Drew, Pre & Post Natal Nutrition Project)
- *Some material is translated. However, time is a problem* (Cheryl Booth, Port Cares: CAPC Niagara Brighter Futures)
- *We are advocating to have materials translated into a variety of different languages, by volunteers who could work out of their home* (Project name withheld by request)

*We provide critical information to parents translated into a number of languages spoken by our parent population.*

Michelle Craig, Expanding Head Start in Edmonton

## An Urdu Adaptation of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating

For People Four Years and Over

Grain Products	1 SERVING			2 SERVINGS		
	5-12 SERVINGS PER DAY		 Cold Cereal 30 g 3/4 cup	 Hot Cereal 175 mL 3/4 cup		 Pasta or Rice 250 mL 1 cup

صحت بخش کھانے کیلئے  
کینیڈا کے غذا کے متعلق ہدایت نامے  
کی اردو مطابقت  
چار سال یا زیادہ عمر کے لوگوں کے لئے

مختلف لوگوں کو کھانے کی مختلف مقدار کی ضرورت ہوتی ہے۔  
کھانے کی مقدار جس کی آپ کو ہر روز غذا کے 4 گروپوں میں سے اور دوسری غذاؤں میں سے ضرورت ہوتی ہے اس کا انحصار  
آپ کی عمر، جسم کے سائز، آپ کی سرگرمی کے لیول، آیا کہ آپ مرد ہیں یا عورت ہیں اور کیا آپ حاملہ ہیں یا چھانی سے بچنے کو  
دودھ پلا رہی ہیں ان سب پر ہے۔ یہی وجہ ہے کہ غذا کا ہدایت نامہ آپ کو غذا کے ہر گروپ کی کم اور زیادہ تعداد میں دست خوان  
لگانے یعنی servings کی تعداد دیتا ہے۔ مثلاً، چھوٹے بچے کم تعداد میں servings چن سکتے ہیں، جبکہ بزرگوں کو زیادہ  
تعداد لے سکتے ہیں۔ بہت سے دوسرے لوگ درمیانے درجے کی servings کا انتخاب کر سکتے ہیں۔

اناج سے تیار کردہ غذا	1 طعام			2 طعام		
	12-5 Servings فی یوم		 30 گرام 3/4 کپ (Cereal)	 175 ملی لیٹر 3/4 کپ (Cereal)		 250 ملی لیٹر 1 کپ

- 1) These Guides have been sponsored by the Ontario Women's Health Council. The Council is fully funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The Guides do not necessarily reflect endorsement by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
- 2) Adapted from Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating for People Four Years and Over, Health Canada, 1992. Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2002. Health Canada does not assume the responsibility for any errors and omissions which may occur during translation.

*Grain products in Urdu. Adapted from Canada's Food Guide to Health Eating for People Four Years and Over, Healthy Canada, 1992. Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2002. Sponsored by the Ontario Women's Health Council. Submitted by Colleen Logue, Nutrition Resource Centre Ontario Public Health Association. Toronto, ON. <[www.nutritionrc.ca/guide.html](http://www.nutritionrc.ca/guide.html)>.*

## Limitations of translation

Translation can offer access to information where there was previously none. However, as the saying goes ‘something is always lost in the translation.’ Helene Osborne comments that “even perfectly exact translations may not make sense to people. Their background or culture may give them a different frame of reference than the one you are using, creating imposing barriers to understanding” (Osborne, Helen. In *Other Words. . . It Takes More Than Just Words; Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Materials. On Call April 2000.* <[www.healthliteracy.com/oncallapr2000.html](http://www.healthliteracy.com/oncallapr2000.html)>).

## Honouring First Nations and Inuit languages and traditions

### Context

First Nations and Inuit languages and cultural traditions are central to the work of many CAPC and CPNP projects. The challenges of preserving traditions and values in a rapidly changing society are complex, and diverse for First Nations and Inuit participants. Consequently project staff must strive to be sensitive to the needs of individual participants within the context of their social and cultural history. Kelly Lemoine, of Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies speaks of the complexity in this way: *Strengths and needs are directly related to cultural traditions and values but have also been affected by today’s society. I have found that it is very important to consider past family history and family dynamics when working with these participants.*

Commenting on the way in which cultural teachings and traditions are valued in present child-rearing practices, Connie Epp noted that, *Cultural teachings and traditional parenting skills are very important to the participants* (Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies). These traditional ways are incorporated in the approach and materials of some projects. However, in others - particularly those serving Aboriginal people off-reserve - staff observe that participants have lost touch with traditional teachings, which raises the question of how Aboriginal traditions should be treated. Stories offer one time-honoured way in which Inuit and First Nations people preserve

*Cultural beliefs about child rearing definitely affect parent-child literacy interactions. Parents struggle to balance cultural history with new language, hard to decide which is more important.*

Candace Wilson, Better Beginnings Now - CAPC

and transmit their cultural traditions; they have been a cultural art form used for generations as a teaching device. Projects observe:

- *Families often have a thirst for knowledge about stories to tell their children* (Marg Mitchell, Otenwa Iyniuk/Ben Calf Robe Society)
- *We use traditional Aboriginal songs and tales, and we invite our Elder in to share a story with the children* (Barb Desjardins, In A Good Way)
- *Storytelling by elders is very popular* (Connie Epp, Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies)

Increasingly, these stories and legends are being told in children's picture books, many of them illustrated by Aboriginal artists using both traditional and contemporary visual art forms. While such picture books can be enjoyed by everyone, they are especially helpful for beginning readers, making the vital connection between oral, visual, and print literacies. Lynda Doige of the Mi'kmaq-Maliseet Institute at the University of New Brunswick has compiled an extensive booklist. She can be contacted at [ladoige@unb.ca](mailto:ladoige@unb.ca)



*Increasingly, stories and legends are being told in children's picture books, many of them illustrated by Aboriginal artists using both traditional and contemporary visual art forms. Photo submitted by Barb Desjardins, In A Good Way, Brandon, MB*

The preservation of First Nations languages has been the subject of much discussion. In an article entitled *Exploring Northwest Territories Literacies*, Helen Balanoff comments that “the health of the Aboriginal languages varies widely, but most are declining. The language shift is clear on the chart [below] which shows the number of people whose mother tongue is an Aboriginal language compared to those who use their Aboriginal language in their home.”

Aboriginal Language Shift						
	Inukitut*	Slavey	Dogrib	Chipewyan	Gwich'in	Cree
Mother Tongue	835	2075	2000	515	250	185
Home Language	160	1190	1355	210	40	30
Change Index	-80.90%	-42.70%	-32.30%	-59.20%	-84.00%	-83.80%

\* Includes Inuvialuktun and Inuinnaqtun (Source: Government of the Northwest Territories)

In spite of this language shift, says Balanoff, “literacy models and practices of many families and communities still reflect those of Aboriginal language and culture: their purposes for using literacy; their ways of supporting children’s literacy development; their attitudes towards literacy and the role that family members play in literacy development.” To facilitate a better understanding of these literacy practices among people involved in literacy development, The Northwest Territories Literacy Council, in partnership with an Aboriginal language community, is presently seeking funding to research traditional and present-day home and community literacies (Balanoff, Helen. *Exploring Northwest Territories Literacies. Literacies #1, Spring 2003.* <[www.literacyjournal.ca](http://www.literacyjournal.ca)>).

*The importance of teaching Native children Aboriginal languages and traditions from a very early age has been stressed repeatedly (Assembly of First Nations 1994; Joint First Nations/Inuit/Federal Childcare working group nd.) . . . By empowering First Nations children and youth through such vehicles as ancestral language training and the instillation of pride in their culture and traditions, improved outcomes are likely on a number of fronts, ranging from personal health to economic productivity.”*

M. D Stout and G.D. Kipling *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: Perspectives and Realities, Vol 4,* Ottawa: The Commission, 1999 <[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnihb-dgspni/fnihb/sppa/ppp/emerging\\_priorities](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnihb-dgspni/fnihb/sppa/ppp/emerging_priorities)>

## Print Materials in Inuit and First Nations languages

Print materials can obviously make a significant difference in the preservation of language and culture. When people have access to books in their first language they have a head start on learning to read because there is a clear connection between what is understood and spoken, and the printed words that represent these ideas.

*Children are taught numbers, letters, words (flashcard type) and songs in Dogrib.*

M. Matheson-Munro,  
Gameti Early Intervention

Some projects report difficulty in accessing print materials in First Nations languages. First Nations linguistic communities are small enough that publishing is not an economically viable proposition for commercial publishers. This means that such resources are extremely limited. As one project comments: *Pemmican Press seems to be our only relevant publisher; we have difficulty in obtaining any materials that celebrate cultural diversity.* (Lorise Cablik, Futures Program).

This is a serious problem for Inuit and First Nations trying to promote authentic literacies that reflect their traditions and cultures. To some extent, the government is helping fill this void. One project noted that *the First Nations Inuit Health Branch has some interesting materials that focus strictly on Aboriginals. They contain simple text and lots of pictures.* The order form for these materials can be found at: [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnihb-dgspni/fnihb/bpm/prc/prc\\_orderform.htm](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnihb-dgspni/fnihb/bpm/prc/prc_orderform.htm)

### *Aboriginal literacy: finding a balance*

*Priscilla George uses the image of a rainbow – balanced, light, multifaceted and full of hope, to speak about Aboriginal literacy. In this image every colour of the rainbow symbolizes a different aspect of literacy: “red represents literacy in the language of origin of First Nations individuals and communities; orange, oral literacy; yellow, the creative means by which Aboriginal people learned to communicate with others who spoke another language by using pictographs (and in contemporary times, artwork, music . . .) and/or sign language; green, literacy in the languages of the European newcomers to this land several hundred years ago English and/or French, which are recognized as Canada’s official languages; blue, the skills required to communicate using technology; indigo, the skills required for spiritual or cultural literacy – the ability to interpret natural things, which are seen to be messages from the Spirit World – the sighting of an animal, the shape of a cloud . . .; and violet, the holistic base to aboriginal literacy, dealing with spiritual, emotional, mental and physical outcomes – striving for balance.*

Priscilla George *Family Literacy through Aboriginal Eyes*, Foundational Training in Family Literacy: Practitioners’ Resource 2002





*These beautifully reproduced children's books could provide a model for publications in other First Nations Languages. Submitted by Brenda Hall, Growing Healthy Together, Hay River, NT. Produced by The NWT Cree Language Program, Canadian Heritage, Department of Education, Culture and Employment. The Government*

*Photographed by Joy Cummings, UNB Integrated Technology Services*

# Cultivating healthy communities

Accessing health, social, and educational services is a complicated and politically charged process. At a practical level there are bureaucratic procedures and legalistic forms to negotiate. The sheer amount of paper is forbidding, and fine print can be intimidating to those who read poorly. There are many factors that can impact on the facility to read, especially when literacy is already an issue. For instance, family and personal crisis can diminish a person's ability to cope with written material. Furthermore, pride may stand in the way of admitting confusion about technical words or jargon. And new parents, new immigrants or those who have been rendered homeless may all be unfamiliar with the range of services available and uninformed about how to access them. Whatever the reason, some parents and prospective parents require literacy support to:

- Access information
- Claim their rights
- Take advantage of services to which they and their children are entitled
- Comply with laws and regulations

## Negotiating paperwork to access services

By helping parents negotiate their way through paperwork, CAPC and CPNP staff help parents improve the quality of life for their families. Indeed, help with reading and writing can make a significant difference to sustaining the family unit. Project staff help parents fill out forms, including:

- Rental agreements
- School registrations
- CPNP Welcome forms
- Financial aid applications
- Applications for further education
- Housing applications
- Income tax returns

*Literate people who have just been diagnosed with a life-changing condition or life threatening disease may also have a hard time taking in a lot of information. The emotional shock of a cancer diagnosis, for example, can render people with good reading skills incapable of processing a large amount of information.*

Canadian Public Health Association *Directory of Plain Language Health Information*, 1999 <[www.pls.cpha.ca](http://www.pls.cpha.ca)>

## Advice, advocacy and support

Support may take the form of advice and advocacy. Sometimes just a ‘guide by the side’ makes a big difference. And whatever task is the primary goal, countless incidental literacy lessons will occur while it is carried out, building confidence and skill with print. Projects report that they:

*Some of our teens are very responsible when it comes to their children while others struggle with a variety of demons in their lives. They are on fixed incomes and tend to struggle with meeting the basic needs for them and their children. Much staff time is spent by staff advocating on their behalf for having their basic needs met.*

Waltraud Grieger, Growing Years  
Family Resource Centre

- *Provide volunteers to go grocery shopping with parents who can't speak English*
- *Advocate on behalf of participants by attending appointments, etc. and help them understand what is being said and/or written* (Wendy Trylinski, The Child/Family Resource Center Inc.)
- *Accompany many women to their doctors' appointments, housing appointments, financial aid appointments, etc. to advocate and support them* (Connie Epp, Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies)
- *Cook, shop, deal with health issues, read books, and help with letters that come to residents* (Debbie Smith, Buccaneer Bay Outreach Centre)
- *Help with school work, income tax, etc.* (Debbie Smith, Buccaneer Bay Outreach Centre)
- *By taking them through tenant applications, resume building, storytelling, bookmaking, chart/poster design, formal/informal discussions, crafts, theme teaching both orally and as written, we begin to bridge the gap between being able to make sense of our world and approaching it with confidence* (Lorise Cablik, Futures Program)

## Empowerment

There is no single, correct source of information on healthy family living or parenting. Celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey have a powerful voice. So do our own mothers and grandmothers, fathers and forefathers. However, so do the companies who spend millions on advertisements prompting us to eat those very same trans-fat laden foods that Health Canada is cautioning against. And even when we ‘listen to the experts’ we find that ‘the experts’ sometimes disagree.

This diversity of ideas is something to celebrate. In a democratic society, everyone is entitled to a voice. But how do we develop a discerning ear, weigh the evidence, and sort out which information is pertinent to us? And how do we find our own voices in this multi-voiced, multi-cultural conversation?

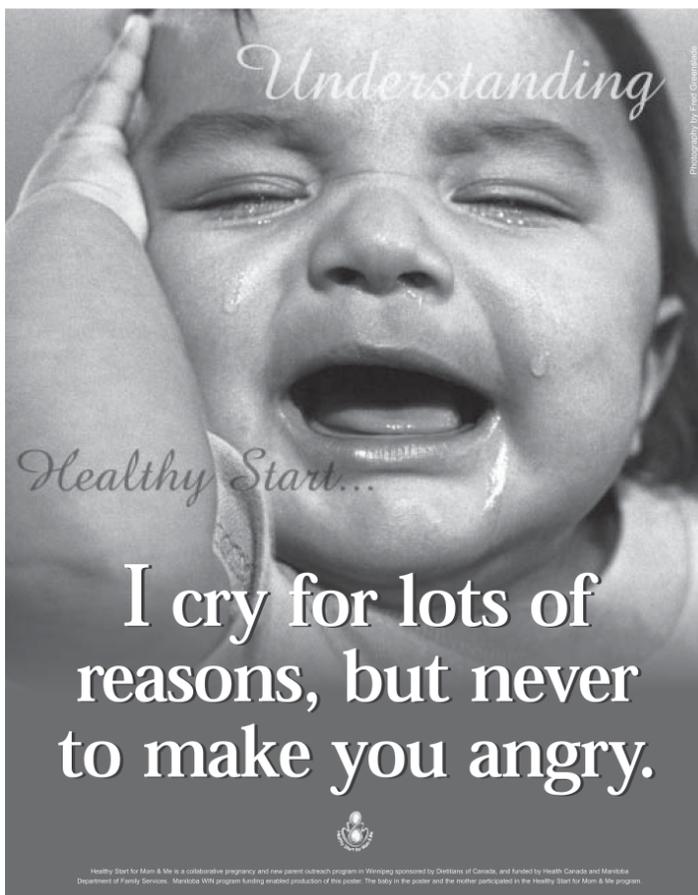
### *A voice in decision-making*

When participants have a voice in the decisions that affect them, staff report these positive effects:

- More control over their lives
- Improved listening skills as well as more confidence to weigh the evidence and speak out accordingly
- Greater understanding of the politics of decision-making

Participants are frequently asked to sit on committees:

- *Parents sit on an advisory committee to help with overall planning* (Ruth Adamchick, Yellowknife Family Centre)
- *Each site in the East Kootenays has their own steering committee to ensure the needs of the communities are being met (parents are also included on these committees), and parents at the groups also give feedback* (Cindy Hoffman, East Kootenay Community Action Program for Children)



*A Healthy Start... one of nine posters from a postnatal poster set produced by parents and staff and available for purchase from Healthy Start for Mom & Me, Winnipeg, MB.*

- *Two former participants sit on Steering Committee (one ESL) and both say they learn a lot from it* (Gail Wylie, Healthy Start for Mom & Me)
- *Parents sit on the Board and Advisory Committees* (Wendy Trylinski, The Child/Family Resource Center Inc.)
- *Participants sit on hiring committees* (Healthy Start for Mom & Me)

Oral and written participant feedback is solicited. Projects report that they:

- *Solicit continuous feedback - simple written anonymous comments dropped in a can, or verbal* (Gail Wylie, Healthy Start for Mom & Me)
- *Maintain content relevance through regular feedback from participants* (Michelle Margrait, Maggie's Place - A Resource Centre for Families)
- *Hold focus groups periodically to gather information and evaluate the program so that there is opportunity for clients who are less literate to participate and respond/ evaluate the services we offer* (Diane Hill, Better Beginnings)
- *Adjust content according to discussion direction of the group* (Gail Wylie, Healthy Start for Mom & Me)

#### *Media literacy: To Swiffer©, or not?*

*Advertisements use pictures and print in combination. Even though we might doubt their claims, the messages are compelling. Debbie Smith, at the South Shore Family Resource centre in Lunenburg, helps participants critique the claims of multi-million dollar ads, thereby resisting the 'hidden persuaders'.*

*"When participants at the South Shore Centre came talking about the merits of the Swiffer© mop they'd seen advertised on TV, their program facilitator suggested that they should find out for themselves if the advertisement was accurate. She purchased a Swiffer© mop for the centre so that participants could test it and see if it lived up to its claims. After personal experience with the mop, no-one wanted to spend their money on a Swiffer©!"*

**Debbie Smith**, South Shore Family Resource Association, Lunenburg site

#### *From consumers to critics*

When participants move from being mere consumers of information to producers, they begin to sharpen their critical awareness about how pictures and print can be used to shape or inform, divide or unite, control or empower. Many projects involve participants in the empowering process of producing information, including videos, posters and pamphlets. As one project puts it: *Our student parents are also active in focus groups for the creation of pamphlets. They were recently chosen to model for the Nobody's Perfect provincial posters. This encourages them to be aware of the important information that can be found in pamphlets and how they can make a difference in making this information current* (Lynne Cornish-Braun, Saskatoon Friends of Students and Kids).

### *Cultivating the confidence to speak out*

Participants have a lot to bring to discussions about health and family life since their socio-cultural experiences offer perspectives that are often absent in published literature. Sadly, many participants enter CAPC and CPNP programs with a history of having been silenced, and lacking the confidence to offer their opinions and expertise freely. Program facilitators must work hard to affirm participants' knowledge and perspectives, and provide support for them to find and raise their voices.

Some ways in which participants are encouraged to speak out:

- Provided with opportunities in peer and community groups to share particular health and childrearing concerns
- Invited to share their stories with other participants
- Encouraged to write poetry, stories, and other items for newsletters

### *Children finding their voices*

Much has been written in the child development literature about the importance of oral language development and receptive vocabulary as a foundation for literacy. However, the current emphasis on 'normal' development and standardised testing can obscure the importance of socio-cultural variations in language and literacy. Critical educators and literacy experts are concerned that normative, psychologized definitions of what counts in language, literacy and readiness only serve to silence and marginalize many of the cultures/languages that make up the cultural mosaic of which Canada is so proud. It is particularly damaging to diminish what young children know.

Working from a strengths-based model, CAPC and CPNP projects strive to honour and build on the cultures, languages, and literacies of children as well as their parents. One way to do this is by encouraging children to express their own experience in pictures, gestures and print, whether in Dogrib or low German, English or Cree. This is how children learn that their lives and what they have to say about them matters.

One project cultivates authorship and authority in children by developing books with children to be read by parents. Many of the programs outlined in Section 3 are designed to help children find their voices by:

- *Offering opportunities for talking, singing, dancing and dramatizing*
- *Encouraging children to tell, draw, and write their own stories*
- *Supporting children to keep records of their experience – collectively and individually*

#### *Collective voices*

The strength and solidarity of belonging to a group is important, whether the common interest is pregnancy, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, diabetes, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, learning to read or raising a family. For one thing, knowing that others have similar experiences is affirming, and speaking out with a collective voice can be a powerful activist tool for effecting social change.

To this end, projects report:

- Referring participants to community literacy and health support groups
- Encouraging families to develop networks with each other

*Able-bodied persons parking in handicapped spots? We don't think so! Even small children can act collectively to effect change. Derman-Sparks tells of an incident where pre-school children observed able-bodied persons parking in spots reserved for the physically handicapped outside their daycare. With the help of their teacher, the children ticketed every offender, and were successful in stopping most unauthorized parkers. The children learned 'the power of the pen'. And their collective, activist voice was affirmed.*

Louise Derman Sparks *Anti-Bias Curriculum: tools for empowering young children*  
Washington, DC NAEYC. 1989

# Supporting everyday needs:

## Cooking/community kitchen:

- It helps people learn to cook as well as read.
- The community kitchen is community run and the project has access to it (Lynne Cornish-Braun, Saskatoon Friends of Students and Kids)
- Single moms cook a meal and take it home with them. There is usually a literacy related theme or focus in each session. Nutrition is also discussed (Robin Hicken, Gesundheit Für Kinder)
- We host breakfast and have only \$25 a week to spend. We believe we need to feed your body before you feed your mind. (Mark Turner, Father Goose, Hilye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship) Society)
- We run a supper club where participants make and eat at the library and take home the leftovers. While the Supper club is running, the library offers homework help for the children of the parents who are cooking. (Cheryl Booth, Port Cares: CAPC Niagara Brighter Futures)
- We use community kitchen for our prenatal group (Lori Lapine, Healthy Babies Right From the Start)
- Many of the teens we serve are single Moms. They are just trying to survive in being a parent. They like attending our community kitchen as it gives them the opportunity to take home finished meals. They like being with other young parents – they learn from each other (Waltraud Grieger, Growing Years Family Resource Centre)



*Reading Recipes. Submitted by Mary Ann Meagher, Brighter Futures. Peterborough Family Resource Centre.*

## CREAMY FRUIT JELL-O™

1 box (85 g) fruit-flavoured gelatin (ex: cherry Jell-O™)

1 cup (250 mL) boiling water

1 cup (250 mL) milk or plain yogurt

1 cup (250 mL) chopped fruit (pears, peaches, mangos, bananas...)

**If you have gestational diabetes, use diet or light Jell-O™.**

1. In a medium bowl, dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Stir well.
2. Add milk or yogurt and stir.
3. Add fruit to gelatin and refrigerate for 4 hours.

Serves 4



Recipe suggested by the Child-Family Nutritionist at the CLSC Côte-des-Neiges.

*Excerpted from Joy of Life Recipe Book for Health Women and Babies. Developed by the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency, Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program and the OLO Foundation, Montreal, Québec.*

## Reading recipes

- Participants are shown by example. We're not really concerned with literacy in the kitchen, but find recipes are a wonderful tool for literacy (Mark Turner, Father Goose, Hilye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship) Society)
- Recipes are written at a basic reading level. Our parents are literate enough to comprehend them (Lynn Cornish-Braun, Saskatoon Friends of Students and Kids)
- We use pictorial recipe cards (Cheryl Booth, Port Cares: CAPC Niagara Brighter Futures).
- We use a visual cookbook, *The Joy of Life*, distributed by the Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program. The cookbook is simple and easy to use. Kids can use it too (Yvette Nechvatal-Drew, Pre & Post Natal Nutrition Project)
- Recipes are typed in large font. We ensure that selected recipes meet the literacy needs of our clients (Jennifer Sells, Bruce and Grey Brighter Futures)

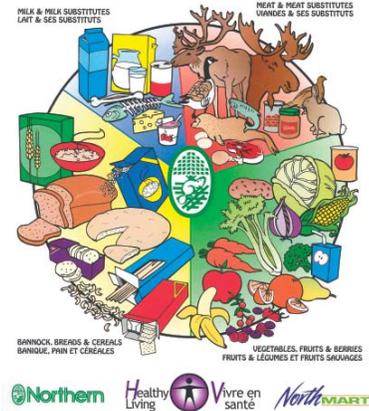
# Healthy eating

3

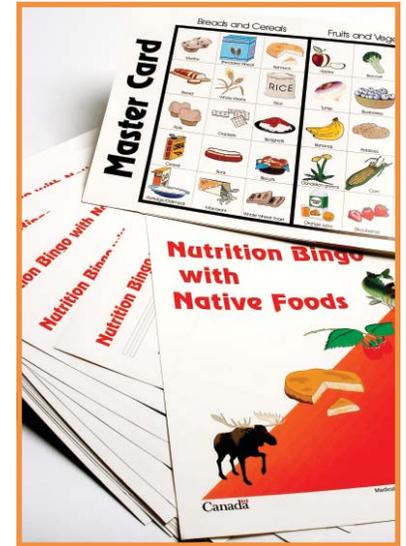
## Shopping

- An outside literacy group make volunteers available to go to the grocery store and help people who struggle with reading (Cathy Leclair, Kids Corp Family Resource Program)
- One thing that really worked well for us was to do a grocery store tour with our immigrant women... imagine going to a grocery store and seeing many unfamiliar foods and not being able to read the labels. Our participants had many questions and we tried to explain some of the more common foods that they might encounter, as well as discussing what good prices were – since they are used to different currencies and prices (Lorraine Makus, Anna's House)

EAT FOODS FROM EACH GROUP EVERY DAY FOR HEALTH  
POUR ÊTRE EN SANTÉ MANGEZ DES ALIMENTS DE CHAQUE GROUPE

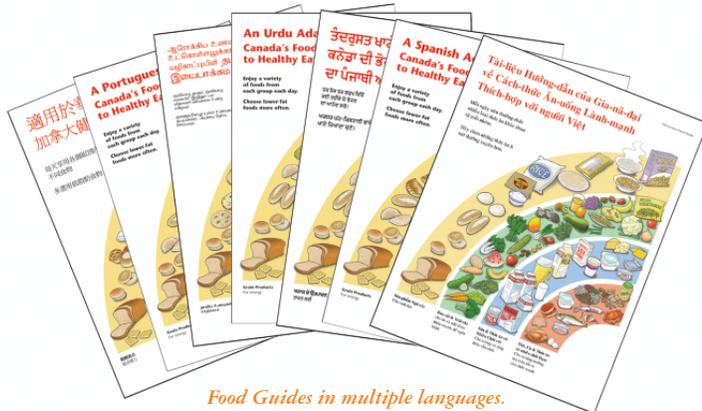


Northern Food Guide. Excerpted from <<http://www.saskschools.ca/~msd/2003/farley/northernfoodguide.html>>



Nutrition Bingo. Submitted by Barb Desjardins, In a Good Way. Brandon MB. Produced by Department of Health, Regina Sask.

S	Salt	Sesame Oil	Snow peas	Soy Sauce
Spinach	Steak	Stock	Strawberry	Sugar
Sweet potato	Cooking Terms. Submitted by Jan Inguanez, Woolwich Community Health Centre. Toronto, ON.			



Food Guides in multiple languages.

Adapted from Canada's Food Guide to Health Eating for People Four Years and Over, Health Canada, 1992. Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2002. Sponsored by the Ontario Women's Health Council. Submitted by Colleen Logue, Nutrition Resource Centre Ontario Public Health Association. Toronto, ON. <[www.nutrition.ca/guide.html](http://www.nutrition.ca/guide.html)>

## Learning about nutrition

- Nutrition Bingo helps participants learn about the four food groups. I.e. there would be a picture of a biscuit on the bingo card with the name of the object next to it. (Leslie Bernstein, Jewish Family Services of the Baron de Hirsch Institute)
- We also provide gift cards for women to buy fruits & vegetables and milk products. (Anita Harms, Family Education & Support Project of Aylmer)
- Provide healthy snacks, eggs and juice program. (Mary Britten-Belding, VON Healthy Baby and Me (CPNP))
- We have used a First Nations puppet/literature kit we borrowed from Diabetes (B.R.H.A.) Education, for food/nutrition/eating education. (Lorise Cablik, Futures Program)

Talking

Photography by Fred Greenstade

Healthy Start...

Talk to me,  
sing to me, show  
me your world.



Healthy Start for Mom & Me is a collaborative pregnancy and new parent outreach program in Winnipeg sponsored by Dietitians of Canada, and funded by Health Canada and Manitoba Department of Family Services. Manitoba WIN program funding enabled production of this poster. The baby in the poster and the mother participated in the Healthy Start for Mom & Me program.

*A Healthy Start... one of nine posters from a postnatal poster set produced by parents and staff and available for purchase from Healthy Start for Mom & Me, Winnipeg, MB.*

# Literacy events, resources and programs

# 4



*Community Readers as Models.*  
Submitted by Early Childhood Centre,  
University of New Brunswick,  
Fredericton, NB.



*National Child Day Event.*  
Submitted by Cheryl Brown, Saint John  
Learning Exchange. Saint John, NB



*Reading Buddies.* Submitted by Cheryl  
Brown, Saint John Learning Exchange. Saint  
John, NB.



*Book Fairs.* Submitted by Pam Whitty,  
Early Childhood Centre, University of New  
Brunswick. Fredericton, NB



*Story Tent.* Submitted by Cheryl  
Brown, Saint John Learning Exchange.  
Saint John, NB

## Literacy events

Many projects work in partnership with literacy and community organizations to help organize community events. They support the participation of the families they serve by helping organize and promote these events and sometimes accompanying families to:

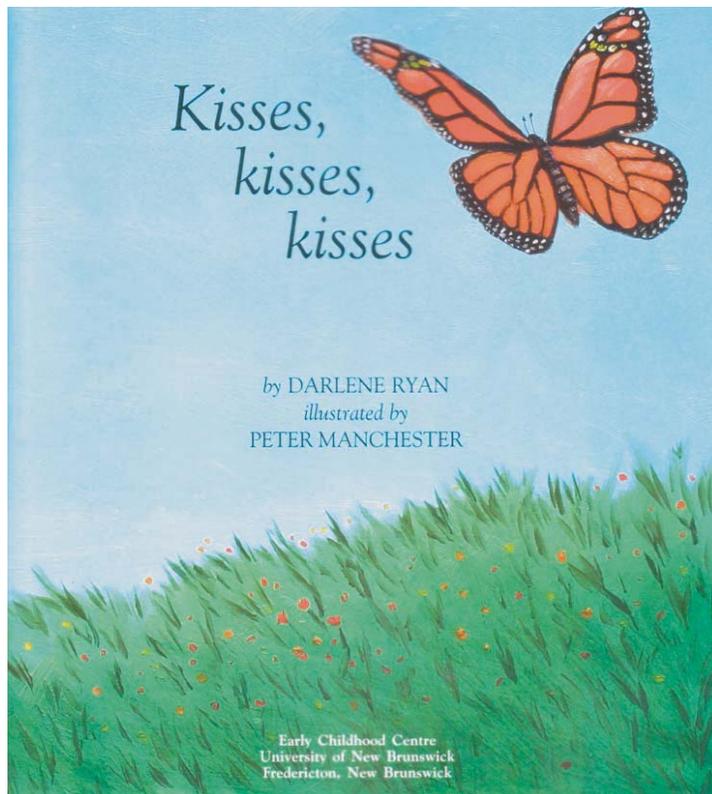
- Story tents
- Library stories/cards
- Literacy day celebrations
- Community readers (as models)
- Book fairs
- Reading circles
- Special events in the community such as National Day of the child and Aboriginal Solidarity Day



*Ready for School.* Submitted by Barb  
Desjardin, In A Good Way. Brandon, MB

## Book giveaways

When children have access to books in the early years they are more likely to succeed at school - where book learning is still the dominant mode of literacy. The importance of placing children's books in the hands of family members is one that many projects conveyed in the *Literacy Matters* survey results. Many projects make books available to low-income families who might otherwise have none. They do this through partnerships with free public libraries, by creating their own circulating collections of books for children and parents, and/or by incorporating book giveaways or book borrowing into specific programs.



*Kisses, kisses, kisses* was commissioned by *Born to Read, New Brunswick* for distribution to newborns and their parents.

## Province-wide initiatives

Through the survey we also learned of province-wide Books for Babies giveaways of books for new borns in three Atlantic provinces – New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland. The funding for the purchase of the books comes from multiple sources, indicative of strong community leadership, support, and a recognition of the role of books in the literacy growth of children, starting from birth.

### New Brunswick :

Born to Read

Contact: Shirley Downey

40 Union St.

St. Stephen, NB E3L 1T5

506-466-1479



*Submitted by Judy Dube from Terra Association.  
Edmonton, Alberta.*

### Nova Scotia:

Read to Me

Contact: Carol, McDougall,

Isaac Walter Killam Health Centre

5850/5980 University Avenue

PO Box 3070, Halifax Nova Scotia

B3J 3G9

902-470-6487 or 902-470-6683

### Newfoundland:

Books for Babies

Contact: Tina Stewart

PO Box 822, 141 O'Connell Avenue

Corner Brook, Newfoundland A2H 0H4

709-634-4888

# Book Giveaways

## Gathering books from many sources

- We have a partnership with the Saskatoon Public Library and they have donated children's books to us. The University of Saskatchewan has donated second hand books for our student parents. We give books as gifts for the children each Christmas. We have had a large number of second hand children's books donated to the program. We have been doing this for nine and a half years and now know which books are most popular (Lynn Cornish-Braun, Saskatoon Friends of Students and Kids)
- Purchase them from fundraising, budgeted monies, First Nations support. (Irene Szabla, Child Development Centre)
- Donated from Early Years Literacy and the Women's University Foundation (Cheryl Booth, Port Cares: CAPC Niagara Brighter Futures)
- The Ontario Federation of Elementary School Teachers made a large donation. (Jan Inguanez, Gesundheit Fur Kinder)
- We receive donated books from the RCMP's 'Adopt a Library' program. (Michelle Ward, Kids First Association)
- Donations from organizations and churches. (Michelle Ward, Kids First Association)
- Purchase from the dollar store (Jennifer Sells, Bruce and Grey Brighter Futures)
- Donated by a teachers' group (Jennifer Sells, Bruce and Grey Brighter Futures)

Sometimes families living on low incomes are reluctant to borrow books for fear of them getting lost or torn. Recognizing this, and acknowledging the pure pleasure of having one's own books to revisit over and over again, book giveaways feature prominently in CAPC and CPNP projects. To get books into the hands of recipients, projects are, as usual, resourceful.

## Giving books to many families

- Books are given to the students as gifts on parenting, relationships, self-esteem, life-skills, cooking, recipes (Lynne Cornish-Braun, Saskatoon Friends of Students and Kids)
- We use some of the books as prizes and an incentive to visit the centre (Cheryl Booth, Port Cares: CAPC Niagara Brighter Futures)
- All participants receive books (Robin Hicken, Gesundheit Fur Kinder)
- We let participants choose (Barb Desjardins, In A Good Way)
- All participants receive books. The four and five year olds get different books than the two and three year olds, who get different books than the newborns (Cathy Leclaire, Kids Corp Family Resource Program)
- Based on child development, a speech pathologist is used to determine the level of development of the child, and then the appropriate book to give them. (Irene Szabla, Child DevelopmentCentre)
- We provide each child attending the program with a Literacy Backpack at the end of the schoolyear: this is filled with books, a stuffed animal reading buddy, information on how to access the library, information on how to encourage literacy, crayons, pencils, etc. (Michelle Craig, Expanding Head Start in Edmonton)
- We solicit donations of children's books which we ensure get into homes of families who could otherwise not afford them. (Robin Hicken, Gesundheit Fur Kinder)
- Parents receive books when they attend daycare/preschool meetings (M. Matheson-Munro, Gameti Early Intervention)
- We hold a "Books for Babies" group weekly that promotes reading with infants. Parents receive a free book each week for their child and a teddy bear and book bag at the end of the session. We also have an informal book exchange of books for adults and children that is available in the common area of our program. (Marg Mitchell, Otenwa Iyniuk/Ben Calf Robe Society)

## Literacy Programs

*It is a serious error to assume that any child brings nothing to new experiences. Indeed all reputable developmental accounts assume that nothing comes from nothing.*

Anne Haas Dyson *Popular Literacies and the "All" Children: Rethinking Literacy Development in Contemporary Childhoods*. Language Arts Vol 81 No.2. 2003

As we noted earlier, project staff typically bring a learner-sensitive approach to child and adult. A learner-sensitive approach implicitly and explicitly recognizes that children and adults bring prior experience and knowledge to literacy programs. This recognition sets the stage for reciprocal learning and mutual respect.

### Program models

Program models are distinguished by a number of factors:

Who they serve – prospective parents, parents, children, or parents and children together;

What goals they seek to accomplish and principles they adhere to;

Where they take place – in homes or centers;

When they occur – duration (how long) and frequency (how often);

How they decide upon and organize program content;

Literacy programs for parents effect children's development and well being, even if the children are not directly involved (Ruth Nickse,1990. Family and Intergenerational Literacy Programs: An Update of the Noises of Literacy ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, Columbus, Ohio). However, programs that involve both children and parents intensively over a period of time have been found to produce the most measurable, positive outcomes. In the survey, we found that a combination of these program approaches were used in CAPC/CPNP projects.

## Choosing a literacy program

Is the literacy program a good choice for CAPC and CPNP projects? To help practitioners decide, we have devised three categories of questions that emerge from both the principles articulated in CAPC/CPNP projects and the practices conveyed in the *Literacy Matters* survey. These categories are: i) fitting the principles; ii) feasibility; iii) effectiveness.

### *Is the program a good choice for CAPC/CPNP projects?*

#### *Children (and mothers) first*

Is the health and development of the child the primary consideration of the program?

How does the language program/resource support and enhance interactions between children and their parents, recognize and build upon individual differences?

#### *Strengthening and supporting families*

Is there support for parents to carry out their primary responsibility for the language and literacy development of their children?

Can the materials, strategies, activities be easily taken from centre to home?

Is there reciprocity of learning within the program – opportunities for modeling language, communicating ideas?

#### *Equity and accessibility*

Do families, regardless of their cultural and socio-economic status, have equal access and opportunities to develop to their full language potential?

Are program materials and methods a good fit for participants' social, linguistic and cultural experiences?

#### *Flexibility*

Can the program be shaped to meet the particular circumstances and changing needs of children and families in diverse communities?

Can it be tailored to meet the immediate and pressing needs of the families we serve?

*Community based*

Do parents and other community members play a key role in the planning, implementation and/or design of the language literacy program?

Can other community organizations help with funding, training and offering the program?

*Partnerships*

How does this language literacy program fit with an effective, coordinated continuum of prevention and early intervention programs for children and their families?

How would this program work as part of the combined efforts for literacy education and support in your community?

*Feasibility*

Will the program work within the constraints of the time, space and staffing we have available?

Is it within our budget?

Is training available?

Are materials readily available?

*Effectiveness*

Does the program have a proven record?

Have other projects used it successfully?

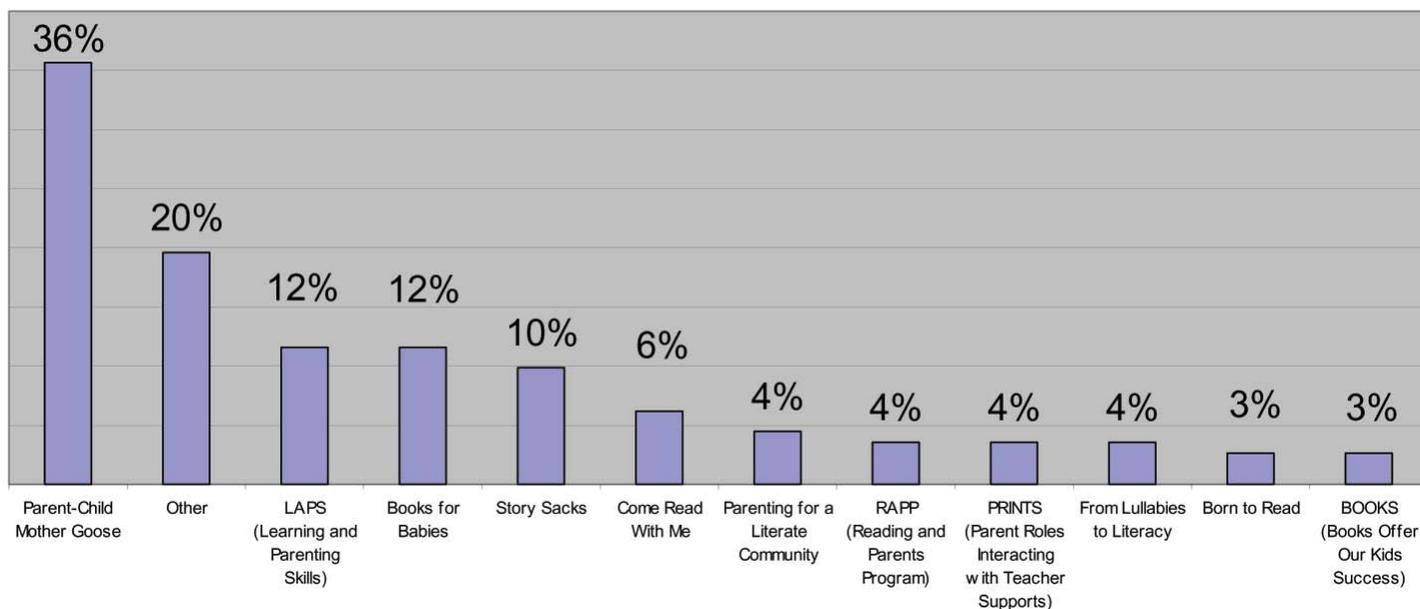
Is there evidence that it meets the desired outcomes for the populations with which we work?

Are the language and literacy outcomes clearly articulated?

### *Programs currently offered reflect available training*

Responses from the *Literacy Matters* survey indicate that literacy programs offered within the CAPC/CPNP projects reflect the training available to the projects. Responses also coincide with recommendations from literacy research in three key areas: i) emphasis on the importance of the oral language development of children including the quality of parent child interactions; ii) recognition that accessing books matters deeply to the literacy potential of children; and finally, iii) embeddedness of literacy learning in broader learning programs.

### Programs offered



*Graph 4. Number of projects responding = 112*

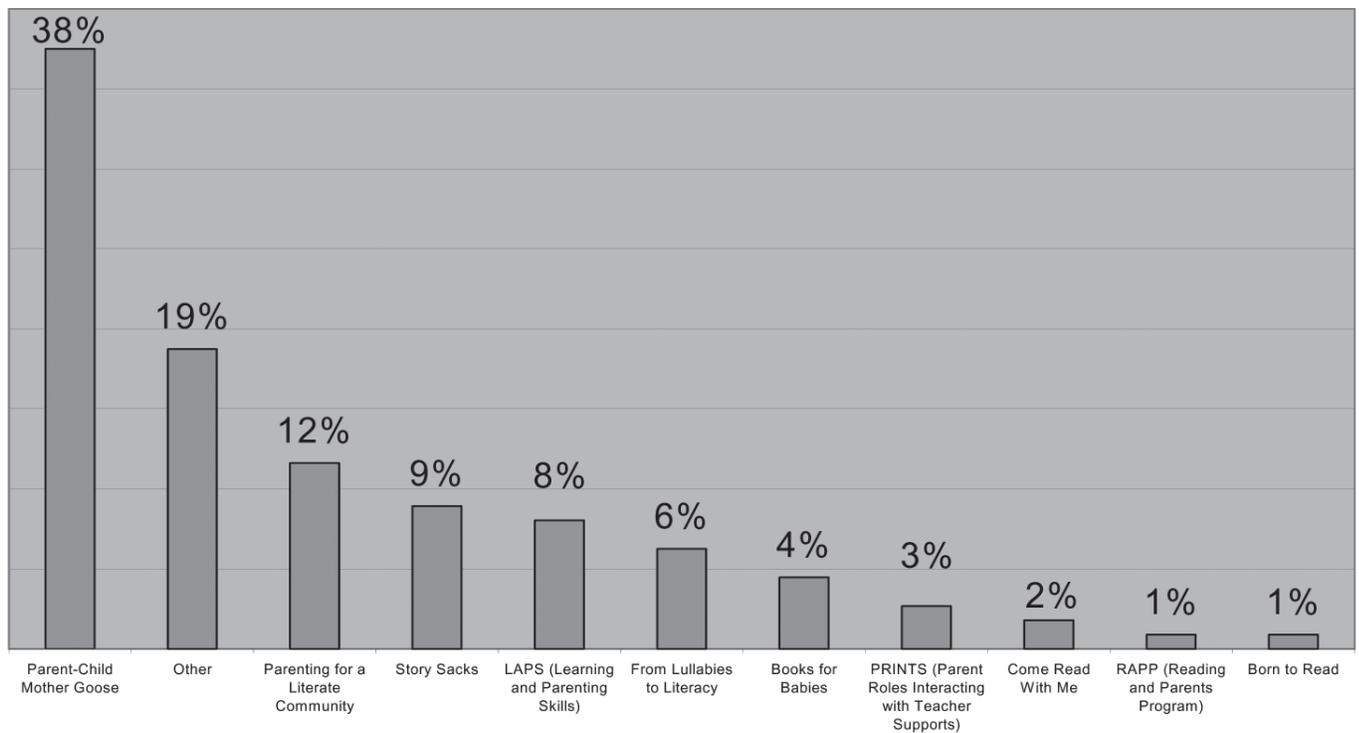
*Projects indicated multiple programs*

Parent-child Mother Goose programs are offered by thirty-six percent of the 112 responding projects. Mother Goose emphasizes language development in young children and the interactive role of parents as the child's first and primary language teacher.

Just over sixty percent of the projects offer programs that give children and their parents access to books, and ideas to enhance a child’s engagement with books. “Children who learn to read early come from families where there are books, and where they are read to often. There is now overwhelming evidence that stimulating experiences with books have facilitative consequences for literacy development.” (p. 9 *Access for All Closing the Book Gap for Children in Early Education*, 2001 by Susan B. Neuman, Donna C. Celano, Albert N. Greco and Pamela Shue, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware).

For thirty-five percent of the responses project staff named broader learning programs, such as Learning Begins, Early Learning Canada (other), and Learning and Parenting Skills (LAPS) as programs where literacy learning occurred, recognizing that literacy is learned in a broader context.

### Training taken by current staff



*Graph 5. Number of projects responding = 112  
Projects indicated multiple programs*

## Oral language programs

### *Parent-Child Mother Goose Program:*

The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program  
720 Bathurst Street, Suite 500A  
Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2R4

**Telephone:** (416) 588-5234

**Fax:** (416) 588-1355

**E-mail:** [mgoose@web.net](mailto:mgoose@web.net)

**Website:** <<http://www.nald.ca/mothergooseprogram/About.htm>>

**Contact Person:** [mgoose@web.net](mailto:mgoose@web.net)

The *Parent-Child Mother Goose* program is a group experience for parents/caregivers and their babies and young children focusing on the pleasure and power of using oral rhymes, songs, and stories together. The program aims to strengthen the parent-child bond while building a supportive parent group. The materials and activities emphasize the critical role of oral literacy as a foundation for print literacy and involves adults in literacy activities in a non-threatening and enjoyable way.

Each group of parents and children (Birth to two and a half or, two and a half to four) meet with two facilitators once a week for ten weeks. Teaching is directed at the parents and they are encouraged to use language with their young children, touch children firmly and appropriately, and make eye contact. Each session ends with a story for parents, often a folktale that prompts discussions of ongoing issues.

**Materials:** See website for a range of possibilities.

**Costs:** There is no charge for families to take part in the program. No materials are required for participants.

**Training:** The host association is charged \$1800.00 for two days of training for up to twenty people. The amount charged varies depending upon accommodations and travel expenses for the *Parent Child Mother Goose* representative.

## *Rhymes That Bind*

Centre for Family Literacy  
#201 - 11456 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton Alberta T5K 0M1

**Telephone:** (780) 421-7323 ext. 242

**Fax:** (780) 421-7324

**E-mail:** [Kimberley\\_Onclin@eLit.ca](mailto:Kimberley_Onclin@eLit.ca)

**Website:** <[www.famlit.ca/rhymes.html](http://www.famlit.ca/rhymes.html)>

**Contact Person:** Kimberly Onclin, Program Manager

*Rhymes That Bind* is as an oral literacy program that also promotes positive parenting. The program focuses on rhyme, story, and song and is held in partnership with community agencies. A circle of families meets to play, learn, sing, share information and support one another in their parenthood journey. The program involves circle time with parents and infants up to two years of age, and is adapted from *Parent-Child Mother Goose*. Two facilitators lead the program for ten weekly sessions, one hour weekly.

**Materials:** Costs are \$20.00 per person.

**Training:** *Rhymes that Bind* requires two days of training (twelve hours) offered by two trainers.

*Talking with Children in your First Language*  
(Primary Language Literacy Project)

Pat Marek-Thornton  
Speech Pathologist  
Ottawa Carleton School District  
133 Greenbank Road  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2H 6L3

**Email:**

**Telephone:** (613) 596-8211 ext. 8657

**Fax:** (613) 596-8705

**E-mail:** [Pat\\_Marek-Thornton@ocdsb.edu.on.ca](mailto:Pat_Marek-Thornton@ocdsb.edu.on.ca)

**Website:** <<http://www.pinecrest-queensway.com/firstwords/English>>

**Contact Person:** Pat Marek-Thornton

The *Primary Language Literacy Project (PLLP)* is a community-based awareness program for parents of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It was developed through a partnership between Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and First Words Preschool Speech and Language Program of Ottawa. Throughout this program, parents are encouraged to use their first language at home with their children to help them develop strong language skills. Topics include: Developing Early Language; Developing Language through Reading and Story Telling; Developing Language through Play and Music; Developing Language through Television and Videos; Preparing Children to Learn at School; Kindergarten Expectations: What You Can Do At Home.

**Materials:** The materials from the *PLLP* focus on encouraging first language use at home. Booklets and videos were developed in Arabic, English, French, Mandarin, and Somali for parents and caregivers of children under six years of age. The booklets and videos provide a general introduction to the six topics listed above.

**Training:** The *PLLP* uses a train-the-trainer model based on community development principles to enable self-sustaining delivery in different communities. Facilitators will be trained to lead groups of parents through the unit(s) in their first language. Workshops are intended to be parent-friendly, interactive and to promote dialogue. The workshops can be made available to parents and/or caregivers, either as a series or as stand-alone units.

## Broad-based literacy programs

### *From Lullabies to Literacy*

Macauley Child Development Centre  
1674 Eglinton Ave. West, 3rd floor  
Toronto, ON  
M6E 2H3

**Telephone:** (416) 789-7441

**Fax:** (416) 789-4719

**E-mail:** [info@maccauleycentre.org](mailto:info@maccauleycentre.org)

**Website:** <<http://www.macauleycentre.org/familit.html>>

**Contact Person:** Sherri Ernst, Program Director: (416) 789-7441 ext. 222

This publication is a product of the Macauley Centre's "Community Family Literacy Project". The aim of the curriculum document is to help community staff and family members promote the development of literacy skills in children. With input from many community agencies and experts, staff at the Macauley Centre has developed a curriculum for use in settings such as family resource centres, childcare programs, parenting groups, and home visiting programs.

The Family Literacy curriculum is based upon the following topics: Building Self-esteem; Talking and Listening; Songs and Rhymes; Sounds of the Alphabet; Storytelling; Sharing Books with Children; Reading Together; Drawing and Writing; Sounds and Words in our World.

During each session, a facilitator leads adults in a discussion around research-based information and their own experience. Adults and children then come together to learn interactive songs and rhymes, enjoy a special selection of books together, and to participate in free play. Adults practice at home some of the new ideas and strategies they have learned through the group discussion and activities of the program.

**Materials:** Curriculum document "From Lullabies to Literacies," \$50.00.

**Training:** Please contact [info@maccauleycentre.org](mailto:info@maccauleycentre.org)

*Parenting for a Literate Community (PLC)*  
*Books for Children and Families (BCF)*

Early Childhood Centre  
 University of New Brunswick  
 P.O. Box 4400  
 Fredericton, New Brunswick  
 E3B 5A3

**Phone:** (506) 453-5024

**Fax:** (506) 458-7841

**E-mail:** [eccentre@unb.ca](mailto:eccentre@unb.ca)

**Web Site:** <[www.unbf/education/ecc/plc](http://www.unbf/education/ecc/plc)>

**Web Site:** <[www.unbf/education/ecc](http://www.unbf/education/ecc)> (Books for Children and Families)

**Contact Persons:** Pam Nason and Pam Whitty

*Parenting for a Literate Community (PLC)* is a program for pre-school children and their families. It has three components: a children's program, a parents' program, and a time for parents and children together. Parents and professionals shape the program together by selecting literacy topics and using everyday experiences as a springboard to literacy learning. The program is flexible and responsive to emerging needs and family circumstances. Key ideas, bedrock principles, and a thematic focus on literacy as empowerment, can be integrated into existing programs and services. The program runs ten weeks, twice a week.

*PLC* includes eight literacy topics: *Books for Babies*; *Singing and Dancing*; *Cultivating Language and Literate Play*; *Honouring Domestic Literacies*; *Predictable Books*; *Folk and Fairy Tales*; *Connecting Home, School and Community*, and *Where Does Fonix Phit?* A set of parallel books for children and their parents, *Books for Children and Families*, draws on themes from *PLC*. Titles include: *Baby and Mommy Go Walking*; *Singing and Dancing*; *Careful Corey*; *Wiggles and Squiggles*; *Seth Writes a Story*; *The Number Hunt*, and *I Am Starting School Today*. Notes for parents provide additional information to facilitate the literacy growth of young children.

**Materials:** *PLC Program* resource materials include a training manual, videotape, and eight booklets on topics in literacy education for young children and their parents (as listed above). The eight literacy booklets can be downloaded from the website in PDF. The Trainer's Manual includes the Literacy booklets and can be purchased for \$120.00. *Books for Children and Families* are \$22.00 plus tax and shipping. These books can be used as a stand-alone or in conjunction with *PLC*. See website for further information.

**Training:** Training is offered on a flexible basis. Costs are \$2000.00 for Level One for a group of eighteen-twenty people, plus travel & accommodation for the facilitators.

## *Book Bridges*

Dr. Bev Zakaluk  
University of Manitoba  
Faculty of Education  
Winnipeg, MB.

Barbara Wynes  
Manitoba Education & Training and Youth  
310-800 Portage Avenue,  
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N8  
Tel: 204-945-1053  
Fax: 204-948-1008  
E-mail: [bwynes@gov.mb.ca](mailto:bwynes@gov.mb.ca)

**Contact:** [Barbara Wynes at bwynes@gov.mb.ca](mailto:bwynes@gov.mb.ca)

**Website:** <[www.nald.ca/fulltext/family/famlit/page73.htm](http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/family/famlit/page73.htm)>

The goal of *Book Bridges* is to promote the personal aspirations and well being of its participants. *Book Bridges* is a family literacy program that uses children's literature to engage learners and explore reading comprehension strategies. The reading component is organized around themes, beginning with the reading of family stories, realistic and historic fiction, fables and folk tales, and concluding with an emphasis on informational text. In addition, *Book Bridges* incorporates process writing.

*Book Bridges* activities are directed toward adult learners with literacy skills that range from non-measurable to approximately the Grade eight levels. The program is not designed to develop test taking, study skills or technical writing abilities, nor is it meant to help participants qualify for general equivalency diploma certification. However, competencies acquired in the program may give participants the confidence to aspire to higher levels of attainment in the future. Sharing their mothers' storybooks, creating albums about family members, and writing family stories indirectly involve the children of participants.

While the *Book Bridges* program originally was designed to accommodate literacy learners in general, the majority of the participants have been immigrant women and their children. A *Book Bridges* handbook containing scripted lessons has been published (National Literacy Secretariat, 1997). Recommended literature selections can be changed to suit the multi-cultural make-up of the group. Participants can write and share stories from their own culture or homeland.

The program consists of sixty hours of instruction over a ten-week period. Sixteen to twenty participants attend two three hour evening sessions per week.

**Materials and Training:** Contact Barbara Wynes.

**Costs:** If housing is provided within an existing program, the essential costs are for instructor's salary and children's literature collections. If program is delivered in collaboration with a library, these funds could also be offset.

### *Reading and Parents Programs*

Community Learning Centre: Kingston, Ontario  
88 Wright Crescent  
Kingston, ON K7K 2V8

**Telephone:** (613) 547-2012

**Fax:** (613) 547-2024

**E-mail:** [info@kingstonliteracy.com](mailto:info@kingstonliteracy.com)

**Website:** <[www.kingstonliteracy.com](http://www.kingstonliteracy.com)>

**Contact:** Susan Barry

*RAPP* is a resource-lending program for parents and caregivers of young children. *RAPP* was designed to help parents learn how to help children learn effectively, and to provide children with quality books and activities. This resource-based program can be used to complement or enhance other programs, as a resource in an adult literacy centre or as an extension of another family literacy program. *RAPP* packs contain a quality children's book, tips for parents on how to use the resources for the development of children's language and emergent literacy skills, craft ideas and materials, poetry selections, and activities for each young child in the family on a biweekly basis. All materials in the pack relate to the theme of the story. An audiotape of the book may be included if permission is received from the publisher. *RAPP* is designed to help parents gain parenting skills, at the same time as helping their preschool children with pre-literacy skills through a series of home activities that include reading to them.

*RAPP* is an eight-session program usually delivered in two to three hour-long sessions. Parents work with facilitators in one area on-site while their children are being attended to and participating in related activities in another area at the same site.

This project has produced a manual entitled, "The Reading and Parenting Project: Strengthening Literacy Skills Through Parent Involvement."

**Materials:** Parents, in adult literacy programs, borrow book packs on a bi-weekly basis. Eight to ten sessions, once every two weeks, one hour group visits.

**Training:** Family literacy staff members visit parent-child playgroups to discuss *RAPP*, demonstrate the use of the materials, and register interested parents.

**Costs:** A program could start with a small selection of books and the collection could be built up gradually.

## *Come Read With Me*

Saskatchewan Literacy Network  
206-220- 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7K 1M1

**Telephone:** Toll free 1-888-511-211

**Website:** <[www.nald.ca/Province/Sask/SLN](http://www.nald.ca/Province/Sask/SLN)>

**E-mail:** [lmourot@sasktel.net](mailto:lmourot@sasktel.net)

**Contact Person:** Lynn Mourot, Family Literacy Coordinator.

*Come Read With Me* is an adaptation of Homespun, which was developed by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network in 1993. Programs are located in a variety of community and school settings. *Come Read With Me* utilizes a six-step learning/reflection process using children's books as a stimulus. The steps utilized by the program are: Share, Do, Plan, Analyze, Name, and Experience. The program shifts from the ready-made lessons that characterized the Homespun model, to a more flexible approach. It provides formats for conducting group sessions, processes for discussions, and ready-to-copy parent handouts. The program strives to empower parents and support them in establishing a reading culture in the home.

**Training:** Contact Lynn Mourot.

Training is offered on a flexible basis, typically for a group of ten people.

A three-day facilitator training is offered, which includes resource materials and certificate of participation on completion. Training covers the following topics: family literacy background and issues, adult education principles, family literacy program models, starting a family literacy program, reaching "hard to reach" parents, facilitator resources, reading strategies and theories, evaluation, and community resources and networking. The training also gives facilitators current literacy statistics, information on fundraising and proposal writing, program evaluation tips, and ways to create fun.

*Books Offer Our Kids Success: BOOKS*

Center for Family Literacy,  
#201, 11456 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, AB  
T6K 1M0

**Telephone:** (780) 421-7323

**E-mail:** [Colleen-Crozier@elit.ca](mailto:Colleen-Crozier@elit.ca)

**Website:** <[www.famlit.ca](http://www.famlit.ca)>

**Contact Person:** Colleen Crozier

The *BOOKS* program is based on the Homespun program developed at Medicine Hat College. *BOOKS* programs are run in collaboration with other community organizations such as Head Start programs, community development projects, school and health centers, and agencies for Aboriginal people, new immigrants and people for whom English is a Second Language. The goals of the program are to improve the language and literacy skills of preschool and primary-aged children and to increase the influence of literacy in the home through pleasurable reading activities centered on children's books. Parents also engage in informal writing, often writing a story with their preschool children.

A qualified, paid facilitator works with up to ten parents, for eight weeks, modeling book sharing strategies. Ideas and themes are discussed and extended by craft and drama activities. Parents also engage in informal writing, often writing a story for their children during the program. Parents borrow books to share at home with their preschool children and receive a gift book.

**Training:** *BOOKS* requires one-and-one-half days of training (six hours the first day, three hours the second) offered by one trainer. The training includes a binder with examples of books to be used as well as crafts and other activities that fit with the books. Training covers how the program is delivered and participants can practice sharing a book in small groups. Tips on good facilitating practices are offered as well as multicultural concerns and choosing children's books. Certificates are provided for those who complete the training. Training is offered every year through the Centre for Family Literacy.

## *Storysacks*

Storysacks Canada  
New Brunswick Coalition for Literacy  
944 Prospect Street  
Fredericton, NB, Canada E3B 9M6

**Telephone:** (506) 457-1227

**Toll free (in Canada):** 1-800-720-6253

**E-mail:** [storysacksinfo@nald.ca](mailto:storysacksinfo@nald.ca) or [jangreer@nald.ca](mailto:jangreer@nald.ca)

**Website:** <[www.storysacks.nald.ca](http://www.storysacks.nald.ca)>

**Contact:** Jan Greer Langley.

*Storysacks* are copyrighted by the originator British educator, Neil Griffiths, who introduced the idea to Canada when he gave a series of workshops in New Brunswick in 1999. Through a national project, *Storysacks* have been promoted and implemented across Canada and a website developed. *Storysacks* support parents who may have low literacy skills themselves, or parents who lack confidence to read aloud, by giving them the confidence to engage their children in literacy development. A *Storysack* is a large cloth bag with specific contents: a good quality children's book, a backdrop and all the props to tell the story, a cassette tape of the story, games that reinforce the themes of the story, a non-fiction book along the same theme as the story and a prompt card to help parents and caregivers take the story to the level of comprehension. Tips on pointing out interesting words and talking about the illustrations in the story are provided. *Storysacks* are made by groups of people in communities who come together in order to make or gather the artifacts that go into the sacks. This involves drawing upon a variety of skills found within communities. Communities are encouraged to ask for help from senior citizens centres, craft-makers, quilters, and those who sew, knit, or crochet. The sacks are given to local agencies for use by children and their parents, teachers or caregivers. To be called a *Storysack*, the artifact must be hand-made and hold specific contents.

**Training:** Contact Jan Greer.

*Parents' Roles Interacting with Teacher Support (PRINTS)*

PRINTS Family Literacy Network

P.O. Box 21121

St. Johns, NL

A1A 5G6

Website: <<http://www.nald.ca/prints/>>

**Contact persons:** Dr. William T. Fagan

P.O. Box 21131

St. Johns, NL A1A 5G6

Fax: (709) 895-2057

E-mail: [gchabot@roadrunner.nf.net](mailto:gchabot@roadrunner.nf.net)

E-mail: [wfagan@mun.ca](mailto:wfagan@mun.ca)

Dr. Mary C. Cronin

Faculty of Education

University of Regina

Regina, SK S4S 0A2

Fax: (306) 585-4880

E-mail: [mary.cronin@uregina.ca](mailto:mary.cronin@uregina.ca)

*PRINTS* is designed to empower parents to foster the literacy development of their young children. The program is built around the concept of Steps and *Roles*. The steps are defined as: Books and Book Sharing; Talk and Oral Language; Play; Environmental Print; and Scribbling or Drawing. In order to help children climb the steps to literacy, parents can engage in various roles. These include: Involving the Child, Recognizing/Acknowledging the Child's Participation, Interacting with the Child, Modeling literacy for the Child, and Setting Guidelines for Doing Things Together.

*PRINTS* is intended to be flexible and involves parents as co-partners in its implementation. The Program runs for twelve sessions of approximately two hours each and is also suitable for preschool and kindergarten teachers.

A facilitator's handbook, training manual, and video have been developed as well as a three-day facilitator-training program.

**Materials:**

PRINTS Parent Video: \$12.00

PRINTS Parent Handbook: \$8.00

**Training:** Please contact the developers directly

If an individual cannot attend training sessions they can self-train:

PRINTS train the facilitator Manual: \$12.00

PRINTS train the facilitator Video: \$20.00

If they attend the training sessions:

PRINTS Facilitators Handbook: \$20.00

## Parenting programs

### *The Hanen Program*

The Hanen Centre  
Suite 515 - 1075 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
M5S 2B1

**Telephone:** (416) 921-1073

**Fax:** (416) 921-1225

**E-mail:** [info@hanen.org](mailto:info@hanen.org)

**Website:** <[www.hanen.org](http://www.hanen.org)>

**Contact:** Michelle Lintott: [michelle@hanen.org](mailto:michelle@hanen.org)

This program was developed in Canada and has been in use for more than twenty years. The *Hanen* program is a group teaching program for parents of children with speech and language impairments aged eighteen months to three years. *Hanen* is led by speech and language pathologists and aims to help parents of such children strengthen their communication skills. Use of videotaping enables parents to see how they interact with their children and shows how to make a difference. In addition, being in a group of parents facing similar difficulties provides opportunities for mutual support. Workshops are also offered to community workers involved in community prevention programs and parent education. These workshops enable community workers, public health nurses and others working with parents and their young children to lead training sessions for other community professionals.

The You Make a Difference Parent-Child Interaction Program is designed for groups of parents to foster the parent-child relationship and promote the child's everyday opportunities to learn social and language skills.

**Training:** You Make a Difference three-day workshop for community professionals. Through interactive, experiential activities community professionals have an opportunity to observe simulated sessions and to practice leading a group of parents.

**Costs:** Contact [michelle@hanen.org](mailto:michelle@hanen.org)

### *Learning and Parenting Skills (LAPS)*

LAPS Program Authors and Directors

Bow Valley College

332 - 6 Ave SE

Calgary AB T2G 4S6

**Telephone:** (403) 410-1501

**Fax:** (403) 297-4949

**E-mail:** [ecairns@bowvalleycollege.ca](mailto:ecairns@bowvalleycollege.ca) or [lmackenzie@bowvalleycollege.ca](mailto:lmackenzie@bowvalleycollege.ca)

**Website:** <<http://www.nald.ca/laps>>

**Contact Persons:** Elaine Cairns and Lauren MacKenzie.

*Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS)* is an innovative family literacy program designed to provide literacy and parenting skills to at-risk parents who wish such training. *LAPS* was created and developed at Bow Valley College, Calgary, Alberta, in partnership with the Further Education Society of Alberta. Materials for the curriculum are based on the needs and concerns that are relevant to parents, i.e. discipline, communication. There are four *LAPS* manuals for: mainstream population groups, aboriginal groups; English as a Second Language groups; and one for Canada's Francophone community.

**Materials:**

**Manuals:** Manuals for the various programs run from \$29.00-36.00 each.

**Videos:** Videos for the different programs: \$29.00 each.

**Training:**

Elaine Cairns and Lauren MacKenzie provide two or three day *LAPS* training workshops to prepare facilitators to set up and operate *LAPS* family literacy classes in their communities. *LAPS* training sessions are intended for literacy coordinators, instructors, facilitators, health care workers, volunteer tutors, and community workers who work with at-risk parents.

**Cost:** Contact authors directly.

Photography by David Greenstade

*Healthy Start...*

# Brain growth in progress... Nutrition & nurturing the keys to a healthy start.



Healthy Start for Mom & Me is a collaborative pregnancy and new parent outreach program in Winnipeg sponsored by Dietitians of Canada, and funded by Health Canada and Manitoba Department of Family Services. Manitoba WIN program funding enabled production of this poster. The babies in the poster and their mothers participated in the Healthy Start for Mom & Me program.

## Working in partnership

Partnerships enhance the vitality and efficiency of CAPC and CPNP projects, offering multiple perspectives and the advantage of considered expertise in literacy education.

In the *Literacy Matters* survey, projects reported that they partner with a variety of organizations, including public libraries, family and community literacy agencies, band councils, and schools. For the most part, opportunities to partner are defined locally. Once familiar with the literacy organizations and agencies in their communities, projects can determine whether to work collaboratively or use them as referral resources, or some combination of the two.

## Community Resources

### BFC Aboriginal Mental Health Services:

*Addiction Worker* - Mondays, all day  
*Women's Circle* - 2nd, 16th & 30th, 7pm  
*Men's Circle* - 9th & 23rd, 7pm  
*Traditional Teachings* - Wednesdays, 7pm  
*Arts & Crafts* - Thursdays, 6:30pm

### Brandon Aboriginal Youth Activity Centre:

Sun-Thurs: 4pm-9pm  
 Fri: 4-11 Sat: 3-11  
 No Fee, call Dayna: 762-8632

### Women's Centre The Gallery Mall:

*"Courage Within"* a self-esteem support group for women who want to improve their self-confidence and work towards a positive future.

September 9th (6-8 weeks)

*"Finding Tomorrow"* a support group for women who have been or are being abused by an intimate partner."

September 4th (12 weeks)

### Brandon RHA 800 Rosser Ave. Town Centre

*Healthy Beginnings*, A Healthy Baby Program - Tuesdays 1-3:30  
 Call Janine 571-8443

*Afternoon Prenatal*, call Jane 571-8382

CAPC/CPNP community calendars keep participants informed about community events and resources. Excerpted from *Community Resources calendar and information*. Submitted by Barb Desjardins, *In A Good Way*. Brandon, MB.

## Addressing common concerns

In the *Literacy Matters* survey, projects were asked to rate issues according to their degree of importance in supporting the literacy needs of CAPC and CPNP participants. Local discussions around many of these issues are ongoing. Clearly it is important to consider how common concerns might inform policy at the project regional and national level. The issues most frequently identified by CAPC and CPNP projects could provide a useful starting point. They are: insufficient funds; the challenges of providing adequate transportation; program uptake and retention; differences between the level of funding available and the intensity and duration of programming required to make long term impacts on the lives of families and communities; meeting individual needs of participants, and recruiting and retaining qualified staff.

## Literacy websites

- National Adult Literacy Database (NALD)- Family Literacy Directory  
<[www.nald.ca/Famlit/common/intro.asp](http://www.nald.ca/Famlit/common/intro.asp)>  
<[www.nald.ca/CLR/family.htm](http://www.nald.ca/CLR/family.htm)>
- Northwest Territories Literacy Council  
<[www.nwt.literacy.ca/resource/Links.htm](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/resource/Links.htm)>
- Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs <[www.frp.ca](http://www.frp.ca)>
- Centre for Family Literacy <[www.famlit.ca](http://www.famlit.ca)>
- Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-being  
<[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth)>
- Child and Family Canada <[www.cfc-efc.ca](http://www.cfc-efc.ca)>
- Family Programmes (U.K.) <[www.familyprogrammes.org](http://www.familyprogrammes.org)>
- Family Literacy Best Practices Guide (Nova Scotia)  
<<http://cehlibrary.ednet.ns.ca/pages/famlit/index.html>>
- Frontier College <[www.frontiercollege.ca](http://www.frontiercollege.ca)>
- National Centre for Family Literacy (U.S.) <[www.famlit.org](http://www.famlit.org)>
- National Children's Alliance (Canada) <[www.nationalchildrensalliance.com](http://www.nationalchildrensalliance.com)>
- National Literacy and Health Program (Ottawa) <[www.nlhp.cpha.ca](http://www.nlhp.cpha.ca)>
- Performers for Literacy <[www.nald.ca/pfl.htm](http://www.nald.ca/pfl.htm)>
- The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy (U.S.)  
<[www.barbarabushfoundation.com](http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com)>

## Resources & Publishers

In addition to the programs reviewed, these resources and publishers were mentioned by one or more projects as being particularly useful.

- **Come Read With Me** <<http://www.nald.ca/lpq/read.htm>>
- **Books for Children and Families**  
Early Childhood Centre  
University of New Brunswick  
Faculty of Education  
P.O. Box 4400  
Fredericton, N.B. E3B 5A3  
Phone: (506) 453-5024  
Fax: (506) 458-7841  
Website: <[www.unbf.ca/education/ecc](http://www.unbf.ca/education/ecc)>  
E-mail: [eccentre@unb.ca](mailto:eccentre@unb.ca)
- **Dads Make a Difference**  
Concordia University  
275 Syndicate St. N  
St. Paul, MN 55104-5494  
<<http://www.dadsmakeadifference.org>>
- **Eagle Crest books** <[www.eaglecrestbooks.com](http://www.eaglecrestbooks.com)>
- **Growing Healthy Together** books (prenatal and postnatal) and videos that target teens effectively.  
Family Service Association  
2 Carlton Street  
Toronto, ON M5B 1J3  
Phone: (416) 586-9777 ext. 224  
Fax: (416) 586-0031  
E-mail: [guh@web.net](mailto:guh@web.net)

- **Health Canada and provincial governments**  
<<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/>>  
<[http://canada.gc.ca/othergov/prov\\_e.html](http://canada.gc.ca/othergov/prov_e.html)>  
CAPC/CPNP booklets:  
<[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dca-dea/programs-mes/npf\\_main\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dca-dea/programs-mes/npf_main_e.html)>
- **Healthy Start for Mom & Me** (prenatal and postnatal posters)  
400 Edmonton Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2M2  
**Phone:** (204) 949-5354  
**Fax:** (204) 949-4800
- **The Aboriginal HIPPY program** from the Chief Dan George Foundation at SFU.  
Community Education Programs  
Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre  
Suite 124 - 515 West Hastings St.  
Vancouver, BC V6B 5K3  
**E-mail:** [hippy@sfu.ca](mailto:hippy@sfu.ca)
- **Morning Glory Press**  
6595 San Haroldo Way  
Buena Park, CA 90620  
**Phone:** 714.828.1998 or 888.612.8254  
**Fax:** 714.828.2049 or 888.327.4362  
**Email:** [jwl@morninggloryprpress.com](mailto:jwl@morninggloryprpress.com)  
<<http://www.morningglorypress.com/>>

- **National Film Board of Canada**  
Sales and Customer Service (D-10)  
P.O. Box 6100  
Station Centre-Ville  
Montreal (QC) H3C 3H5  
**Phone:** 1-800-267-7710  
**Fax:** (514) 283-7564  
<<http://www.nfb.ca/e/index.html>>
- **Native Reflections:** for posters, calendars etc. Learning Cree Language  
Books: Duval Publishing in Edmonton 1-800-267-6187
- **Nobody's Perfect:**  
**Phone:** (613) 952-1220  
**Fax:** (613) 952-1556  
**E-mail:** [DCA\\_public\\_inquiries@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:DCA_public_inquiries@hc-sc.gc.ca)  
<[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dca-dea/family\\_famille/nobody\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dca-dea/family_famille/nobody_e.html)>
- **Nutrition Bingo:**  
Indian and Northern Health Services  
Contact:  
In A Good Way  
Brandon Friendship Centre  
321-9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brandon, MB R7A 4A8
- **Our Children, Our Way videos**  
Red River College,  
2055 Notre Dame Avenue,  
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0J9  
<<http://www.rrc.mb.ca/ece/resources.htm>>

- Scott O'Dell's **Black Star, Bright Dawn**  
<<http://www.scottodell.com/>>  
Email: [fishvenus@scottodell.com](mailto:fishvenus@scottodell.com)
- **Sunburst Visual Media**  
PO Box 11210  
Tempe, AZ 852840021  
Phone: 1-800-431-1934  
Fax: 1-888-803-3908  
E-mail: [service@sunburstvm.com](mailto:service@sunburstvm.com)  
<[http://www.sunburstvm.com/product\\_store/index.jsp](http://www.sunburstvm.com/product_store/index.jsp)>
- Today's Parent <[www.todaysparent.com](http://www.todaysparent.com)>